
STATE PAPERS,

RELATIVE TO THE

NEGOTIATION FOR PEACE, &c,

[PRICE ONE SHILLING.]

STATE PAPERS

EXPLANATION OF THE

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RELATIVE TO THE

NEGOTIATION FOR PEACE;

CONTAINING

The DECLARATION *of the* COURT *of*
GREAT BRITAIN;

THE

OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE between LORD MAL-
MESBURY and the COMMISSIONERS of the FRENCH
DIRECTORY at LISLE; and HIS MAJESTY'S
SPEECH on opening the present Session :

TOGETHER WITH

THE ADDRESSES OF THE LORDS AND COMMONS,

AND

HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS ANSWERS.

LONDON:

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1797.

STATE PAPERS

NEGOTIATION FOR PEACE

THE DECLARATION OF THE COURT OF
GREAT BRITAIN

Official Correspondence between Lord Mal-
mesbury and the Commissioners of the French
Government at Paris; and His Majesty's
Speech on opening the present Session

183,4-27

TOGETHER WITH

THE ADDRESSES OF THE LORDS AND COMMONS

THE MOST GRACIOUS ANSWERS

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LONDON:

Printed for J. WRIGHT, opposite Old Broad Street,
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DECLARATION

OF THE

COURT OF GREAT BRITAIN.

[PUBLISHED BY HIS MAJESTY'S COMMAND.]

HIS Majesty's benevolent endeavours to restore to his people the blessings of secure and honourable Peace, again repeated without success, have again demonstrated beyond the possibility of doubt, the determined and persevering hostility of the Government of France, in whose unprovoked aggression the war originated, and by whose boundless and destructive ambition it is still prolonged. And while by the course of these transactions, continued proofs have been afforded to all his Majesty's faithful subjects, of his anxious and unremitting solicitude for their welfare, they cannot at the same time, have failed to recognize, in the uniform conduct of the enemy, the spirit by which the Councils of France are still actuated, and the objects to which they are directed.

His Majesty could not but feel how much the means of Peace had been obstructed by the many additional difficulties which his enemies had so repeatedly thrown in the way of every Negotiation. Nevertheless, on the very first appearance of circumstances in some degree more favourable to the interests of humanity, the same ardent desire for the ease and happiness of his subjects, induced his Majesty to renew his overtures for terminating the calamities of war: thus availing himself of every opening which could in any manner lead to secure an honourable Peace, and consulting equally the wishes of his own heart, and the principles by which his conduct has invariably been guided.

New obstacles were immediately interposed by those who still directed the Councils of France, and who, amidst the general desire for Peace, which they could not at that time openly disclaim, still retained the power of frustrating the wishes of their own country, of counteracting his Majesty's benevolent intentions, and of obstructing that result, which was so necessary for the happiness of both nations. Difficulties of form were studiously created; modes of negotiation were insisted upon, the most inconsistent with their own conduct in every other instance; the same spirit appeared in every step which was taken by

by them; and while the most unwarranted insinuations were thrown out, and the most unfounded reproaches brought forward, the established customs and usages, which have long prevailed in Europe, were purposely departed from, even in the simplest acts which were to be done on their part for the renewal of the Negotiations. All these things his Majesty determined to disregard; not as being insensible of their purport and tendency, nor unmindful of the importance of these points, in the public intercourse of great and independent nations; but resolving to defeat the object of these artifices, and to suffer no subordinate or inferior consideration, to impede, on his part, the discussion of the weighty and extensive interests on which the termination of the war must necessarily depend.

He directed his Minister to repair to France, furnished with the most ample powers, and instructed to communicate at once an explicit and detailed proposal and plan of Peace, reduced into the shape of a regular Treaty, just and moderate in its principles, embracing all the interests concerned, and extending to every subject connected with the restoration of public tranquillity. The communication of this Paper, delivered in the very first conference, was accompanied by such explanations as fully stated and detailed the utmost extent of his Majesty's views, and at the same time gave ample room for the examination of every disputed point, for mutual arrangement and concession, and for reciprocal facilities arising out of the progress of fair discussion.

To this proceeding, open and liberal beyond example, the conduct of his Majesty's enemies opposes the most striking contrast. From them no Counter project has ever yet been obtained: no statement of the extent or nature of the conditions on which they would conclude any Peace with these Kingdoms. Their pretensions have always been brought forward either as detached or as preliminary points, distinct from the main object of Negotiation, and accompanied, in every instance, with an express reserve of farther and unexplained demands.

The points which, in pursuance of this system, the Plenipotentiaries of the Enemy proposed for separate discussion in their first conferences with his Majesty's Minister, were at once frivolous and offensive; none of them productive of any solid advantage to France, but all calculated to raise new obstacles in the way of Peace. And to these demands was soon after added another, in its form unprecedented, in its substance extravagant, and such as could originate only in the most determined and inveterate hostility. The principle of mutual compensation, before expressly admitted by common consent, as the just and equitable basis of Negotiation, was now disclaimed; every idea of moderation or reason, every appearance of justice, was disregarded; and a concession was required from his Majesty's Plenipotentiary, as a preliminary and indispensable condition of Negotiation, which must at once have superseded all the objects, and precluded all the means of treating. France, after incorporating with her own dominions so large a portion of her conquests, and affecting to have deprived herself, by her own internal regulations, of the power of alienating these valuable additions of territory, did not scruple to demand from his Majesty the absolute and unconditional surrender of all that the energy of his People, and the Valour of his Fleets and Armies, have conquered in the present War, either from France or from her Allies. She required that the power of Great Britain should be confined within its former limits, at the very moment when her own dominion was extended

tended to a degree almost unparalleled in history. She insisted, that in proportion to the increase of danger, the means of resistance should be diminished; and that his Majesty should give up, without compensation, and into the hands of his Enemies, the necessary defences of his possessions, and the future safeguards of his empire. Nor was even this demand brought forward as constituting the terms of Peace, but the price of Negotiation; as the condition on which alone his Majesty was to be allowed to learn what further unexplained demands were still reserved, and to what greater sacrifices these unprecedented concessions of honour and safety were to lead.

Whatever were the impressions which such a proceeding created, they did not induce the King abruptly to preclude the means of Negotiation. In rejecting without a moment's hesitation a demand, which could have been made for no other reason than because it was inadmissible, his Majesty, from the fixed resolution to avail himself of every chance of bringing the Negotiation to a favourable issue, directed that an opening should still be left for treating on reasonable and equal grounds, such as might become the dignity of his Crown, and the rank and station in Europe in which it has pleased the Divine Providence to place the British Nation.

This temperate and conciliatory conduct was strongly expressive of the benevolence of his Majesty's intentions; and it appeared for some time to have prepared the way for that result which has been the uniform object of all his measures. Two months elapsed after his Majesty had unequivocally and definitively refused to comply with the unreasonable and extravagant Preliminary which had been demanded by his Enemies. During all that time the Negotiation was continued open, the conferences were regularly held, and the demand thus explicitly rejected by one party, was never once renewed by the other. It was not only abandoned; it was openly disclaimed; assurances were given in direct contradiction to it. Promises were continually repeated, that his Majesty's explicit and detailed proposals should at length be answered by that which could alone evince a real disposition to negotiate with sincerity, by the delivery of a Counter-project, of a nature tending to facilitate the conclusion of Peace; and the long delays of the French Government in executing these promises were excused and accounted for by an unequivocal declaration, that France was concerting with her Allies for those sacrifices on their part, which might afford the means of proceeding in the Negotiation. Week after week passed over in the repetition of these solemn engagements on the part of his Majesty's Enemies. His desire for Peace induced him to wait for their completion, with an anxiety proportioned to the importance of the object; nor was it much to expect that his Minister should at length be informed what was the extent and nature of the conditions on which his Enemies were disposed to terminate the War.

It was in this stage of the business that, on the 11th of September, the appointment of new Plenipotentiaries was announced on the part of France, under a formal promise that their arrival should facilitate and expedite the work of Peace.

To renew, in a shape still more offensive than before, the inadmissible demand so long before brought forward, and so long abandoned, was the first act of these new Messengers of Peace. And such was now the undisguised impatience of the King's Enemies to terminate all treaty, and to exclude all prospect of accommodation, that even the

continuance of the King's Plenipotentiary at the appointed place of Negotiation was made by them to depend on his immediate compliance with a condition which his Court had, two months before, explicitly refused, and concerning which no farther discussion had since occurred. His reply was such as the occasion required: and he immediately received a positive and written order to depart from France.

The subsequent conduct of his Majesty's Enemies has aggravated even this proceeding, and added fresh insult to this unexampled outrage. The insurmountable obstacles which they threw in the way of Peace were accompanied with an ostentatious profession of the most pacific dispositions. In cutting off the means of Negotiation, they still pretended to retain the strongest desire to negotiate: in ordering the King's Minister to quit their country, they professed the hope of his immediate return to it. And in renewing their former inadmissible and rejected demand, they declared their confident expectation of a speedy and favourable answer. Yet before any answer could arrive, they published a Declaration, announcing to their country the departure of the King's Minister, and attempting, as in every former instance, to ascribe to the conduct of Great Britain the disappointment of the general wish for Peace, and the renewal of all the calamities of War. The same attempt has been prolonged in subsequent Communications, equally insidious and illusory, by which they have obviously intended to furnish the colour and empty pretence of a wish for Peace, while they have still studiously and obstinately persisted in evading every step which could lead to the success of any Negotiation; have continued to insist on the same inadmissible and extravagant Preliminary, and have uniformly withheld all explanation, either on the particulars of the Proposals of Peace, so long since delivered by his Majesty's Minister, or on any other terms on which they were themselves ready to conclude: and this in the vain hope, that it could be possible by any artifice to disguise the truth of these transactions, or that any exercise of power, however despotic, could prevent such facts from being known, felt, and understood, even in France itself.

To France, to Europe, and to the world, it must be manifest, that the French Government (while they persist in their present sentiments) leave his Majesty without any alternative, unless he were prepared to surrender and sacrifice to the undisguised Ambition of his Enemies, the Honour of his Crown and the Safety of his Dominions. It must be manifest that, instead of shewing on their part, any inclination to meet his Majesty's pacific overtures on any moderate terms, they have never brought themselves to state any terms (however exorbitant) on which they were ready to conclude Peace. They have asked as a Preliminary (and in the form the most arrogant and offensive) Concessions, which the comparative situation of the two Countries would have rendered extravagant in any stage of Negotiation; which were directly contrary to their own repeated professions; and which nevertheless, they peremptorily required to be complied with in the very outset; reserving an unlimited power of afterwards accumulating, from time to time, fresh demands, increasing in proportion to every new Concession.

On the other hand, the Terms proposed by his Majesty have been stated in the most clear, open, and unequivocal manner. The discussion of all the points to which they relate, or of any others, which the Enemy might bring forward as the Terms of Peace, has been, on his Majesty's

Majesty's part, repeatedly called for, as often promised by the French Plenipotentiaries, but to this day has never yet been obtained. The rupture of the Negotiation is not, therefore, to be ascribed to any pretensions (however inadmissible) urged *as the Price of Peace*; not to any ultimate difference *on Terms*, however exorbitant; but to the evident and fixed determination of the Enemy to prolong the contest, and to pursue, at all hazards, their hostile designs against the prosperity and safety of these Kingdoms.

While this determination continues to prevail, his Majesty's earnest wishes and endeavours to restore Peace to his Subjects must be fruitless. But his sentiments remain unaltered. He looks with anxious expectation to the moment when the Government of France may shew a disposition and spirit in any degree corresponding to his own. And he renews, even now, and before all Europe, the solemn Declaration, that, in spite of repeated provocations, and at the very moment when his claims have been strengthened and confirmed by that fresh success which, by the Blessing of Providence, has recently attended his arms, he is yet ready (if the calamities of War can now be closed) to conclude Peace on the same moderate and equitable principles and terms which he has before proposed: the rejection of such terms must now, more than ever, demonstrate the implacable animosity, and insatiable ambition of those with whom he has to contend, and to them alone must the future consequences of the prolongation of the War be ascribed.

If such, unhappily, is the spirit by which they are still actuated, his Majesty can neither hesitate as to the principles of his own conduct, nor doubt the sentiments and determination of his People. He will not be wanting to them, and he is confident they will not be wanting to themselves. He has an anxious, but a sacred and indispensable duty to fulfil: he will discharge it with resolution, constancy, and firmness. Deeply as he must regret the continuance of a War, so destructive in its progress, and so burthenome even in its success, he knows the character of the brave People whose interests and honour are entrusted to him. These it is the first object of his life to maintain: and he is convinced, that neither the Resources nor the Spirit of his Kingdoms will be found inadequate to this arduous contest, or unequal to the importance and value of the objects which are at stake. He trusts that the favour of Providence, by which they have always hitherto been supported against all their Enemies, will be still extended to them; and that, under this protection, his faithful Subjects, by a resolute and vigorous application to the means which they possess, will be enabled to vindicate the Independence of their Country, and to resist with just indignation the assumed superiority of an Enemy, against whom they have fought with the courage, and success, and glory of their Ancestors; and who aims at nothing less than to destroy at once whatever has contributed to the prosperity and greatness of the British Empire; all the channels of its industry, and all the sources of its power; its security from abroad, its tranquillity at home; and, above all, that Constitution, on which alone depends the undisturbed enjoyment of its Religion, Laws, and Liberties.

Westminster, Oct. 25, 1797.

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE

RELATIVE TO THE

NEGOTIATION FOR PEACE, &c.

(No. 1.) Official Note.—Lord Grenville to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the French Republic.

THE signature of the preliminaries of a peace, the definitive conclusion of which is to put an end to the continental war, appears to afford to the two Governments of Great Britain and France a natural opportunity and new facilities for the renewal of pacific negotiations between them. A part of the obstacles, which might have retarded this salutary work, no longer existing; and the interests to be treated of being, after this event, neither so extensive nor so complicated as they were before.

The Court of London, always desirous of employing such means as are best calculated to contribute to this object, so interesting to the happiness of the two nations, is unwilling to omit renewing to the French Government the assurance of the continuance of its dispositions on this subject. And the undersigned is authorised to propose to the Minister for Foreign Affairs to enter without delay, and in such manner as shall be judged the most expedient, upon the discussion of the views and pretensions of each party, for the regulation of the preliminaries of peace, which may be definitively arranged at the future Congress.

As soon as the form of this negotiation shall have been agreed upon, the British Government will be ready to concur in it, by taking on its part such measures as are the most proper for accelerating the re-establishment of the public tranquillity.

Westminster, June 1, 1797.

(Signed) GRENVILLE.

(No. 2.) Official Note.—The Minister for Foreign Affairs to Lord Grenville.

The undersigned Minister for Foreign Affairs of the French Republic, lost no time in laying before the Executive Directory the note which was transmitted to him on the 1st of June (O. S.) by Lord Grenville, in the name of His Britannic Majesty. He is directed to answer it.

The

The Executive Directory sees with satisfaction the desire which the Cabinet of St. James's expresses to put an end, at length, to the calamities of war. It will receive with eagerness the overtures and proposals which shall be made to it by the Court of England.

The Executive Directory desires notwithstanding, that the negotiations should be set on foot at once for a definitive treaty. This proceeding appears to the Directory preferable to a Congress, of which the result must be remote, and which does not correspond with the ardent desire that it has to re-establish, as quickly as possible, peace between the two powers.

(Signed) CH. DELACROIX.

Paris, 16 Prairial, 5th year of the French Republic, one and indivisible, June 4, 1797.

(No. 3.) Official Note.—Lord Grenville to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The Court of London has received with the greatest satisfaction, the assurances of the dispositions of the Executive Directory to entertain with eagerness the pacific overtures of Great Britain, as well as of its desire to re-establish, as soon as possible, peace between the two powers.

Anxious to contribute to it in every thing which can depend upon itself, the British Government will not delay to send to Paris, or to such other place upon the Continent, as may be agreed upon, a Minister, to treat and conclude with the Plenipotentiary, who shall be appointed by the Executive Directory,

The undersigned is directed to desire to know the wish of the Directory, as to the place of the negotiation, in order that a speedy determination may be taken here upon that subject; and to request the Minister for Foreign Affairs to send him, without delay, the necessary passports, to enable the King's Plenipotentiary to repair immediately to his destination. The question of signing preliminary or definitive articles, will necessarily depend upon the progress and turn of the negotiations, to which, on the part of Great Britain, will be brought the most sincere desire for the speedy re-establishment of peace.

Westminster, June 8, 1797. (Signed) GRENVILLE.

(No. 4.) Official Note.—The Minister for Foreign Affairs to Lord Grenville.

The Executive Directory of the French Republic has seen with satisfaction, by the Official Note of Lord Grenville, dated June 8th (O. S.) that the Court of London shews itself disposed to set on foot, without delay, the negotiation for which it has lately made an overture. Filled with the same eagerness, convinced that the intentions of the British Government are such as it describes them, the Directory has directed the undersigned Minister for Foreign Affairs, to transmit to Lord Grenville the necessary passports for a Minister furnished with full powers for the purpose of negotiating a definitive and separate treaty of peace with the French Republic.

The

The Executive Directory has fixed upon the Commune of Lisle as the place of meeting for the respective Plenipotentiaries.

(Signed) CH. DELACROIX.

Paris, 23 Prairial, 5th year of the French Republic, June 11, 1797.

(No. 5.) Liberty, Equality. Fraternity, Union.
In the name of the French Republic.

To all officers, civil and military, charged to maintain public order in the different departments of France, and to make the French name respected abroad.

Allow to pass freely
furnished with the full powers of His Britannic Majesty for the purpose of negotiating, concluding, and signing a definitive and separate treaty of peace with the French Republic, Native of, &c. &c.
going to Lisle, Department of the North, the place appointed for the negotiation, without giving or suffering any hindrance to be given to him.

This passport shall be in force for Decades only.
Given at Paris, the 23 Prairial, 5th year of the Republic,
one and indivisible.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, (Signed) CH. DELACROIX.
By the Minister, (Signed) T. GUIRAUDET.

(No. 6.) Official Note.—Lord Grenville to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The undersigned has received from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the French Republic his Official Note, with the passport which accompanied it.

The Court of London willingly accepts the proposal of the French Government with respect to the place of negotiation, and consents that Lisle shall be appointed as the place of meeting for the respective Plenipotentiaries: it being always understood that the King's Plenipotentiary shall have liberty to dispatch his couriers directly from Lisle to Dover, by way of Calais; and that the English vessels, appointed for keeping up this communication, shall be allowed freely to go into, and come out of, the port of Calais, and to pass in perfect safety between that city and Dover.

With respect to the passport, the undersigned finds himself under the necessity of remarking that the terms in which this instrument is drawn up, differ from the usual form, by the particular description, which is inserted in them, of the nature and extent of the powers, and of the mission of the King's Plenipotentiary.

This new form appears liable to produce, in many instances, considerable inconvenience; and, according to the terms used in this particular instance, it would have the disadvantage of not answering exactly to the powers and the mission of the Minister in question.

His full powers, drawn up in the usual form, will include every case; and without prescribing to him any particular mode of negotiation, will give him the most unlimited authority to conclude any articles of treaties, whether preliminary or definitive, as might best conduce to the speedy re-establishment of peace, which is the sole object of his mission.

But the Court of London does not by any means make a point of concluding a preliminary treaty, and would prefer only that mode, whatever it may be, which shall be found the best calculated to accelerate the conclusion of peace.

The King's Plenipotentiary then will be equally ready, and authorized to begin the negotiation without delay, upon either footing; upon the footing of a preliminary treaty—or, should such continue to be the wish of the Directory, upon that of a definitive treaty.

As to what regards the question of a separate treaty—there would be no objection to settling, by a treaty of this kind, whatever relates to the respective interests of France and of Great Britain, as has been usually the practice in similar cases: But the King cannot allow any doubt to subsist as to his intention of providing for what is due to the interests of his ally Her Most Faithful Majesty: And in pursuance of the same principles, his Majesty will not refuse to enter into such explanations with respect to the interests of Spain and Holland as may appear necessary for the re-establishment of peace.

After this frank and precise explanation, the British Government is persuaded that the Directory will not delay to transmit to them a passport for the British Plenipotentiary and his suite, in the usual form, and such as was sent in the month of October last for the mission with which Lord Malmesbury was then charged.

In this expectation, and for the sake of avoiding all delay, his Majesty has already made choice of the same Minister to represent him on this important occasion: And the undersigned is charged to inquire on what day the French Plenipotentiary will be at Lille, in order that Lord Malmesbury may arrive there at the same time.

Westminster, June 17, 1797. (Signed) GRENVILLE,

(No. 7.) Official Note.—The Minister for Foreign Affairs to Lord Grenville.

The undersigned Minister for Foreign Affairs has laid before the Directory, immediately upon its receipt, the official note addressed to him by Lord Grenville, dated June 17, 1797 (O. S.) He loses no time in replying to it, according to the orders which he has received.

The Directory, partaking most sincerely in the pacific sentiments which His Britannic Majesty announces, and wishing to bring the negotiations as quickly as possible to an happy issue, persists in requiring that the respective Plenipotentiaries shall begin immediately upon their meeting to treat of a definitive treaty. The Directory accepts, with satisfaction, the consent of His Britannic Majesty upon this subject, expressed in the note of Lord Grenville.

The Directory consents that His Britannic Majesty shall make, by his Plenipotentiary, such proposals or stipulations as he shall think proper for Her Most Faithful Majesty, as in return the Plenipotentiaries of the Republic will do for their allies His Catholic Majesty and the Batavian Republic.

The Directory consents that the negotiation shall be opened with Lord Malmesbury. Another choice would, however, have appeared to the Directory to augur more favourably for the speedy conclusion of peace.

The Directory requires that it shall be established as a principle, that each English packet boat, which shall have brought over either the Plenipotentiary or a Courier, shall return without delay, and shall not be allowed to make any stay. The Directory will give orders that a French packet boat shall be furnished, without delay to each of the Couriers whom the Plenipotentiary of His Britannic Majesty shall dispatch. The Directory desires, at the same time, that the
Couriers

Couriers should not be sent too frequently; the frequent sending of them having been one of the principal causes of the rupture of the former negotiation.

After the above explanation, it becomes unnecessary to transmit to Lord Grenville a new passport; the restrictions which he apprehended were to be found in that which has been addressed to him being entirely done away.

The French Plenipotentiaries will have arrived at Lisle by the time at which Lord Malmesbury can himself be there.

(Signed)

CH. DELACROIX.

Paris, 2 Messidor.

(June 20, 1797.)

(No. 8.) Official Note.—Lord Grenville to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The undersigned has laid before the King the official note of the French Government, which he received the 23d of the present month.

As to the two first articles of this note, both parties are agreed. On this point, therefore, is nothing to be added to the explanations already given: in consequence of which explanations Lord Malmesbury will, without delay, proceed to Lisle to enter into a negotiation with the French Plenipotentiaries for the completion of a definitive treaty. The remark of the Directory upon the choice which His Majesty has thought fit to make of his Plenipotentiary, being certainly of a nature not to require any answer.

The British Government agrees to the arrangement proposed for the packet boats; provided that a French packet boat shall be furnished regularly, and without the least delay, for each Courier which the British Plenipotentiary shall find it necessary to dispatch: the exercise of his incontestable right in this respect being to be governed by his own discretion only, with a view to bringing the negotiation with which he is charged to a speedy and successful end.

With regard to the rupture of the last negotiation, the circumstances and the motives of it are known to all Europe; and it is not at the moment of entering into a new pacific discussion that the British Government conceives it can be of any use to recall them to recollection.

Lord Malmesbury will set out from London on the 30th of this month to proceed to Calais; from whence he will arrange his departure according to the notification he may receive of the day on which the French Ministry may reach Lisle.

Westminster, June 26, 1797.

(Signed)

GRENVILLE.

(No. 9.) Official Note.—The Minister for Foreign Affairs to Lord Grenville.

The undersigned Minister for Foreign Affairs lost no time in laying before the Executive Directory the official note addressed to him by Lord Grenville, dated the 21st of June, (O. S.) 5th of the present month Messidor.

In answer to this note, he has the honour to declare to Lord Grenville, that the Plenipotentiaries charged by the Directory with the negotiation, are already assembled in Lisle, and that the conferences may be set on foot as soon as the Plenipotentiary of His Britannic Majesty shall have arrived there. Provision has been made that there shall

never be a want of packet boats for the couriers which he shall think proper to send to London.

The undersigned at the same time apprizes Lord Grenville, that a copy of this note will be delivered to Lord Malmesbury on his arrival at Calais, in order that there may be nothing to hinder his immediate departure for Lisle.

(Signed) CH. DELACROIX.

Paris, 11 Messidor, 5th year. (June 29, 1797.)

(No. 10.) Extract of a dispatch from Lord Malmesbury to Lord Grenville, dated Lisle, July 6th, Thursday, 8 P. M. 1797.

MY LORD,

Having had this morning my first conference with the French Plenipotentiaries, and having mutually exchanged our full powers, I think it my duty to dispatch a messenger, in order that His Majesty may have the earliest information of this circumstance. My dispatch, however, must be confined to this alone, as nothing whatever has yet passed relative to the negotiation itself.

(No. 11.) *Equality.* *Liberty.*

Extract from the Registers of the Deliberations of the Executive Directory.

Paris, the 30th Prairial, 5th year of the French Republic, one and indivisible.

The Executive Directory, after having heard the report of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, decrees as follows :

The Citizens Letourneur, heretofore Minister of the Executive Directory, Pleville le Pelley, and Maret, are authorised to negotiate with the Minister Plenipotentiary of His Britannic Majesty, the treaty of peace to be concluded between the French Republic and Great Britain. The Directory gives them the necessary full powers for agreeing upon and signing the articles of the treaty to be made. They shall conform themselves to the instructions which have been, or shall be given to them by the Executive Directory, to whom they shall render an account of the progress and the issue of the negotiations.

They are equally authorised, and under the same conditions, to stipulate for the allies of the Republic, his Catholic Majesty, and the Batavian Republic.

The Citizen Colchen, appointed Secretary General to the French legation, is authorised to assist at the conferences, to afford the information which shall be required of him, and to take a note of what shall be agreed upon and settled.

The present decree shall not be printed for the present.

(A true copy.) The President of the Executive Directory.

CARNOT.

By the Executive Directory, the Secretary General.

LAGARDE.

(No. 12.) Extract of a dispatch from Lord Malmesbury to Lord Grenville, dated Lisle, July 11, 1797.

I had the honour in my last, by Brooks, of the 6th inst. to inform your Lordship of my arrival here, of the manner in which I had been received.

received, and of my having, in the usual form, exchanged my full powers with the French Plenipotentiaries.

On Friday the 7th, at noon, we held our second conference.

I opened this second conference with the French Plenipotentiaries, by saying, that I myself had no observations to make on their full powers, which appeared to be conformable to those usually given by the Directory to their Plenipotentiaries, and of course must be considered as sufficient for the purposes expressed in them; that I, however, had transmitted them by a messenger to my Court, and reserved to myself the right of communicating any objections or remarks which I might receive by the return of my messenger, relative to them.

M. le Tourneur, to whom, as President of the Commission, I addressed myself, replied, that they had taken precisely the same steps as myself; that they considered the full powers I had given in, as in due form, and sufficient; but that they also reserved to themselves the same right, in regard to instructions they might receive from the Directory on this subject, as I had claimed in regard to my Court.

To this, of course, I assented.

On Saturday the 8th instant I gave in the *projet* precisely as I had received it from your Lordship; a copy of which (A), as it is translated into French, I think it my duty to enclose.

One of the French Plenipotentiaries proposed that some time should be given them to take the proposals I had made into consideration, and begged of me merely for the sake of accuracy, and to help their memory, that I would be good enough either to let M. Colchen put down on paper, or myself send them a note containing the words with which I wished the articles left in blank to be filled up. I readily acquiesced in the latter mode, and immediately on my return sent them the inclosed note (B).

On Sunday evening I received the enclosed note (C) from the French Plenipotentiaries, and in consequence of it went to the proposed conference yesterday.

One of the French Plenipotentiaries informed me on the subject of the *projet* I had given them, and the note with which I had accompanied it, that as these papers contain many points on which their instructions did not enable them to answer, they had, after having given them a very serious attention, sent them, with such observations as they had thought it their duty to make on them, to the Directory; and that the moment they received an answer they would communicate it to me. But that, in the meanwhile, not to delay the progress of the negotiation, they wished that several points which he termed insulated, but which, though not referred to in our *projet*, were, he said, inseparably connected with the general subject of peace, might be discussed and got rid of now if I had no objection, and that it was with this view they had requested me to meet them.—On my not expressing any disapprobation to this mode of proceeding, one of the French Plenipotentiaries began, by saying, that in the preamble of the treaty the title of King of France was used; that this title, they contended, could no longer be insisted on—the abolition of it was in a manner essential to the full acknowledgement of the French Republic, and that as it was merely titular as far as related to his Majesty, but quite otherwise in the sense in which it applied to them, he hoped it would not be considered as an important concession.

I informed

I informed them, that on all former occasions a separate article had been agreed to, which appeared to me to answer every purpose they required, and which it was my intention, as the treaty advanced, to have proposed, as proper to make part of this. The article (the first of the separate ones in the treaty of 1783) was then read; but they objected to it, as not fully meeting their views. It was to the title itself, as well as to any right which might be supposed to arise from it, that they objected. I could scarce allow myself to treat this mode of reasoning seriously. I endeavoured to make them feel that it was cavilling for a mere word; that it was creating difficulties where none existed; and that if all the French monarchs in the course of three centuries had allowed this to stand in the preamble of all treaties and transactions between the two countries, I could not conceive, after its having been used for so long a period without any claim or pretension being set forth in consequence of it, how it could now affect either the dignity, security, or importance of the Republic—that in fact such titles have ever been considered as indefeasible, and as memorials and records of former greatness, and not as pretensions to present power; and I quoted the titles of the Kings of Sardinia and Naples, &c. as examples exactly in point. I argued however in vain. They treated it very gravely, and made so strong a stand upon it, that I could not avoid taking it for reference, which I thought it better to do, than, feeling as I did at the moment, to push the conversation farther.

The second insulated point was a very material one indeed, and which, although it has been adverted to as a proposal that might possibly be brought forward, I confess came upon me unexpectedly.—It was, to ask either a restitution of the ships taken and destroyed at Toulon, or an equivalent for them. They grounded this claim on the preliminary declaration made by Lord Hood on his taking possession of Toulon; and on the eighth article of the declaration of the Committee of the Sections to him. They said, peace they hoped was about to be re-established; that his Majesty, in acknowledging the Republic, admitted that a sovereignty existed in the French Government; and of course that the ships, held only as a deposit by England till this legal authority was admitted, ought now to be restored. I replied, that this claim was so perfectly unlooked for, that it was impossible for me to have been provided for it in my instructions, and that I could therefore only convey my own private sentiments on it, which were, that they could not have devised a step more likely to defeat the great end of our mission.—*One of the French Plenipotentiaries* said, that he sincerely hoped not; that without a restitution of the ships an equivalent might be found to effect the purpose desired, since their great object was, that something should appear to prove that this just demand had not been overlooked by them, and was not left unsatisfied by us. I told him fairly, I did not see where this equivalent was to be found, or how it could be appreciated; and that considering the great advantages France had already obtained by the war, and those she was likely to obtain from the act of concession I had already intimated his Majesty was disposed to make in order to restore peace, I was much surprised and deeply concerned at what I heard. I trusted, therefore, that this very inadmissible proposal would be withdrawn. They said it was not in their power; *one of them*, from a written paper before him, which he said were his instructions, read to me words to the effect I have already stated.

Their

Their third question was as to any mortgage we might have upon the Low Countries, in consequence of money lent to the Emperor by Great Britain.—They wished to know if any such existed, since, as they had taken the Low Countries charged with all their incumbrances, they were to declare that they should not consider themselves bound to answer any mortgage given for money lent to the Emperor, for the purpose of carrying on war against them.

I told them that, without replying to this question, supposing the case to exist, the exception they required should have been stated in their treaty with the Emperor, and could not at all be mixed up with ours; that if they had taken the Low Countries as they stood charged with *all* their incumbrances, there could be no doubt what these words meant; and that if no exception was stated in the first instance, none could be made with a retroactive effect.

The French Plenipotentiaries, however, were as tenacious on this point as on the other two; and as I found to every argument I used that they constantly opposed their instructions, I had nothing to do, but to desire that they would give me a written paper stating their three claims, in order that I might immediately transmit it to your Lordship, and on this being promised, our conference broke up.

Between four and five P. M. yesterday I received the enclosed note (D), and I have lost no time since it is in my possession in preparing to send away a messenger; as independent of the disagreeable subjects brought forward in this last conference, and which it is material should be communicated without delay, I am anxious his Majesty should be informed of what has passed in general up to this day, as it may perhaps furnish some ideas as to the possible event of the negotiation.

(No. 13. A.) *Projet of a Treaty of Peace.*

Be it known to all those whom it shall or may in any manner concern, The most Serene and most Potent Prince George the Third, by the Grace of God, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, Duke of Brunswick and Lunenburgh, Arch Treasury and Elector of the Holy Roman Empire, and the Executive Directory of the French Republic, being equally desirous to put an end to the war, which has for some time past subsisted between the dominions of the two parties, have named and constituted for their Plenipotentiaries, charged with the concluding and signing of the definitive treaty of peace; viz: the King of Great Britain, the Lord Baron of Malmesbury, a Peer of the kingdom of Great Britain, Knight of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Privy Councillor to His Britannic Majesty, and the Executive Directory of the French Republic,

who, after having exchanged their respective full powers, have agreed upon the following articles:

I. As soon as this treaty shall be signed and ratified, there shall be an universal and perpetual peace as well by sea as by land, and a sincere and constant friendship between the two contracting parties, and their dominions, and territories, and people, without exception of either places or persons; so that the high contracting parties shall give the greatest attention to the maintaining between themselves and their said dominions, territories, and people, this reciprocal friendship and intercourse, without permitting hereafter, on either part, any kind of hostilities to be committed either by sea or by land, for any cause, or under any pretence whatsoever. There shall be a general

ral oblivion and amnesty of every thing which may have been done or committed by either party towards the other before or since the commencement of the war; and they shall carefully avoid for the future every thing which might prejudice the union happily re-established.

Immediately after the exchange of the ratification of this treaty, orders shall be sent to the armies and squadrons of both parties to stop all hostilities; and for the execution of this article, sea passes shall be given on each side to the ships dispatched to carry the news of peace to the possessions of the two parties.

II. The treaties of peace of Nimeguen of 1678 and 1679, of Ryswick of 1697, and of Utrecht of 1713; that of Baden of 1714; that of the triple alliance of the Hague of 1717; that of the quadruple alliance of London of 1718; the treaty of peace of Vienna of 1736; the definitive treaty of Aix la Chapelle of 1748; the definitive treaty of Paris of 1763; and that of Versailles of 1783, serve as a basis and foundation to the peace, and to the present treaty. And for this purpose they are all renewed and confirmed in the best form, so that they are to be exactly observed for the future in their full tenour, and religiously executed by both parties in all the points which shall not be derogated from by the present treaty of peace.

III. All the prisoners taken on either side, as well by land as by sea, and the hostages carried away or given during the war, shall be restored, without ransom, in six weeks at latest, to be computed from the day of the exchange of the ratifications of the present treaty. Each party respectively discharging the advances which shall have been made for the subsistence and maintenance of their prisoners in the country where they shall have been detained, according to the receipts, attested accounts, and other authentic vouchers, which shall be furnished on each side; and security shall be reciprocally given for the payment of the debts which the prisoners may have contracted in the countries where they may have been detained, until their entire release.

IV. With respect to the rights of fishery on the coasts of the island of Newfoundland, and of the islands adjacent, and in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, the two parties shall return to the same situation in which they stood respectively, according to the treaties and engagements subsisting at the period of the commencement of the war. And with this view, His Majesty consents to restore to France, in full right, the islands of Saint Pierre and Miquelon.

V. The same principle of the state of possession before the war, is adopted by mutual consent, with respect to all other possessions and rights on both sides, in every part of the world, save only the exceptions which are stipulated by the subsequent articles of this treaty: and to this intent, all possessions or territories which have or may have been conquered by one of the parties from the other (and not specially excepted in this treaty), shall be restored to the party to whom they belonged at the commencement of the present war.

VI. From this principle of mutual restitution, the two parties have agreed to except which shall remain to His Britannic Majesty in full sovereignty.

VII. In all the cases of restitution provided by the present treaty, the fortresses shall be restored in the same condition in which they now are, and no injury shall be done to any works that have been constructed since the conquest of them.

VIII.

VIII. It is also agreed, that in every case of restitution or cession provided by any of the articles of this treaty, the term of three years from the date of the notification of the treaty, in the respective territory or place restored or ceded, shall be allowed to persons of whatever description, residing or being in the said territory or place, possessed of property therein under any title existing before the war, or which has since devolved to them by the laws then existing; during which term of three years they shall remain and reside unmolested in the exercise of their religion, and in the enjoyment of their possessions and effects, upon the conditions and titles under which they so acquired the same, without being liable in any manner, or under any pretence, to be prosecuted or sued for their past conduct, except as to the discharge of just debts to individuals; and that all those who, within the time of months after the notification of this treaty, shall declare to the government, then established, their intention to withdraw themselves, or their effects, and to remove to some other place, shall have and obtain within one month after such declaration full liberty to depart and to remove their effects, or to sell and dispose of the same, whether moveable or immoveable, at any time within the said period of three years, without any restraint or hindrance, except on account of debts at any time contracted, or of any criminal prosecution for acts done subsequent to the notification of this treaty.

IX. As it is necessary to appoint a certain period for the restitutions herein-before stipulated, it is agreed, that the same shall take place in Europe within (one month), in Africa and America within (three months), and in Asia within (six months), after the ratification of the present treaty.

X. For preventing the revival of the law suits which have been ended in the territories to be restored by virtue of this treaty, it is agreed, that the judgements in private causes pronounced in the last resort, and which have acquired the force of matters determined, shall be confirmed and executed according to their form and tenour.

XI. The decision of the prizes and seizures of ships and their cargoes taken at sea or seized in the ports of either country, prior to the hostilities, shall be referred to the respective courts of justice; so that the legality of the said prizes and seizures shall be decided according to the law of nations, and to treaties, in the courts of justice of the nation which shall have made the capture, or ordered the seizures. And in order to prevent all causes of complaint and dispute which may arise on account of prizes which may be made at sea after the signing of this treaty, it is reciprocally agreed that the vessels and effects which may be taken in the British Channel and in the North Seas, after the space of twelve days, to be computed from the exchange of the ratifications of this treaty, shall be restored on each side:—That the term shall be one month from the British Channel and the North Seas, as far as the Canary Islands, inclusively, whether in the ocean, or in the Mediterranean:—Two months from the said Canary Islands as far as the equinoctial line or equator:—Three months from the equator to any part to the westward of the Cape of Good Hope, and the eastward of Cape Horn:—And lastly, five months in all other parts of the world, without any exception, or any more particular description of time or place.

XII. The allies of the two parties, that is to say, Her Most Faithful Majesty as ally of His Britannic Majesty, and His Catholic Majesty and the Batavian Republic as allies of the French Republic, shall be invited by the two contracting parties to accede to this peace on the terms and conditions specified in the three following articles; the execution of which the said two contracting parties reciprocally guarantee to each other, being thereto respectively authorized by their above-mentioned allies:—And the two contracting parties farther agree, that if their allies respectively shall not have so acceded within the space of two months after the exchange of the ratifications of this treaty, the party so refusing to accede, shall not receive from its ally any aid or succour of any nature during the farther continuance of the war.

XIII. His Britannic Majesty engages to conclude a definitive peace with His Catholic Majesty on the footing of the state of possession before the war, with the exception of which shall remain in full sovereignty to His Britannic Majesty.

XIV. His Britannic Majesty in like manner engages to conclude a definitive peace with the Batavian Republic on the same footing of the state of possession before the war, with the exception of which shall remain to His Britannic Majesty in full sovereignty, and of which shall be ceded to His Majesty in exchange for

In consideration of these restitutions, to be hereby made by his Britannic Majesty, all property belonging to the Prince of Orange, in the month of December 1794, and which has been seized and confiscated since that period, shall be restored to him, or a full equivalent for money given him for the same. And the French Republic farther engages to procure for him, at the general peace, an adequate compensation for the loss of his offices and dignities in the United Provinces; and the persons who have been imprisoned or banished, or whose property has been sequestered or confiscated in the said Republic, on account of their attachment to the interests of the House of Orange, or to the former Government of the United Provinces, shall be released, and shall be at liberty to return to their country, and to reside therein, and to enjoy their property there, conforming themselves to the laws and constitution there established.

XV. The French Republic engages to conclude a definitive peace with Her Most Faithful Majesty on the same footing of the state of possession before the war, and without any farther demand or burthensome condition being made on either side.

XVI. All the stipulations contained in this treaty, respecting the time and manner of making the restitutions therein mentioned, and all the privileges thereby referred to the inhabitants or proprietors in the island or territories reserved or ceded, shall apply in like manner to the restitutions to be made by virtue of any of the three last articles, viz. the XIIIth, the XIVth, and the XVth, except in those instances where the same may be derogated from by the mutual consent of the parties concerned.

XVII. All former treaties of peace between the respective parties, to whom the said three articles relate, and which subsisted and were in force at the commencement of hostilities between them respectively, shall be renewed, except in such instances only where the same may be derogated

derogated from by mutual consent; and the articles of this treaty for the restoration of prisoners, the cessation of hostilities, and the decision relative to prizes and seizures, shall equally apply to the respective parties to whom the said three articles relate, and shall be held to be in full force between them, as soon as they shall respectively and in due form have acceded to this treaty.

XVIII. All sequestrations imposed by any of the parties named in this treaty, on the rights, properties, or debts of individuals belonging to any other of the said parties, shall be taken off, and the property of whatever kind shall be restored in the fullest manner to the lawful owner; or just compensation be made for it; and all complaints of injury done to private property, contrary to the usual practice and rules of war, and all claims of private rights or property which belonged to individuals at the periods of the commencement of hostilities respectively, between the said parties, viz. Great Britain and Portugal on the one side, and France, Spain, and Holland on the other; and which ought, according to the usual practice and laws of nations, to revive at the period of peace, shall be received, heard, and decided in the respective courts of justice of the different parties; and full justice therein shall be done by each of the said parties to the subjects and people of the other, in the same manner as to their own subjects or people.

And if any complaint should arise respecting the execution of this article, which complaints shall not be settled by mutual agreement between the respective Governments within twelve months after the same shall have been preferred to them, the same shall be determined by sworn Commissioners to be appointed on each side, with power to call in an arbitrator of any indifferent nation; and the decision of the said Commissioners shall be binding, and without appeal.

XIX. His Britannic Majesty and the French Republic promise to observe sincerely, and bona fide, all the articles contained and established in the present treaty; and they will not suffer the same to be infringed, directly or indirectly, by their respective subjects; and the said contracting parties guarantee to each other, generally and reciprocally, all the stipulations of the present treaty.

XX. The solemn ratifications of the present treaty, prepared in good and due form, shall be exchanged in between the contracting parties, in the space of a month, or sooner if possible, to be computed from the day of the signature of the present treaty.

In witness whereof, &c.

(No. 14. B.) Note from Lord Malmesbury to the French Plenipotentiaries.

The Minister Plenipotentiary of His Britannic Majesty has the honour of presenting to the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic, in consequence of the wish expressed by them in the conference of this morning, the following note, which he requests them at the same time to consider, not so much in the light of an official paper as of a verbal and confidential communication, and as a proof of his readiness to facilitate the progress of the negotiation, by giving them on the very outset, all the explanations in his power on the projet of the treaty which he has delivered to them.

If, as the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic have assured him, it is contrary to their most positive instructions to enter into
any

any discussion relative to the cession of those possessions which belonged to France before the war, it is useless to dwell on the VIth article; since the compensations which his Britannic Majesty might have demanded by that article, in return for the restitutions which he is disposed to make for the re-establishment of peace, must, in consequence of this declaration, be sought for in the cessions to be made by His Catholic Majesty, and the Batavian Republic.

Lord Malmesbury therefore proposes to insert in the thirteenth article, after the words *status ante bellum*, the following words: "With the exception of the island of Trinidad, which shall remain in full possession of His Britannic Majesty."

Lord Malmesbury imagines that it is unnecessary for him to repeat the reasons which induce him to insist upon the retaining of this conquest, unless compensation should be made for it by some other cession which shall balance the augmentation of power accruing to France from the acquisition of the Spanish part of St. Domingo.

With regard to the fourteenth article, Lord Malmesbury proposes, that after the words *status ante bellum*, should be added, "With the exception of the town, fort, and establishment of the Cape of Good Hope, and of the possessions which belonged to the Dutch before the war in the island of Ceylon, and of the town and fort of Cochin, which shall be ceded to His Britannic Majesty in exchange for the town of Negapatnam and its dependencies."

Lord Malmesbury repeats to the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic the assurance of his readiness to concur with them, in every thing which shall depend on him, to bring the negotiation to a happy issue; and requests of them, at the same time, to accept the assurances of his high consideration.

Lisle, July 8, 1797.

(Signed) MALMESBURY.

(No. 15, C.) Note. From the French Plenipotentiaries to Lord Malmesbury.

The Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic have received the note which the Minister Plenipotentiary of His Britannic Majesty did them the honour of addressing to them yesterday. They will give to it, as well as to the project of a treaty to which it relates, the most serious attention. In the mean time, though they are not yet enabled to communicate to Lord Malmesbury the remarks to which these two papers appear to them liable, they think it their duty to propose to him a conference to-morrow, at one o'clock, if that hour is agreeable to him, in order to treat with him on distinct points, the discussion of which may be entered upon separately, and which may be proceeded in without delay.

They request Lord Malmesbury to accept the assurances of their high consideration.

(Signed)

Lisle, 21 Messidor,
5th Year of the Republic,
July 9th, 1797.

LE TOURNEUR,
PLEVILLE LE PELLEY,
HUGUES B. MARET,
COLCHEN, Sec. Gen. of the Leg.

(No. 16, D.) Note. From the French Plenipotentiaries to Lord Malmesbury, dated Lisle.

The Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic lose no time in complying with the wish expressed to them by the Minister Plenipotentiary

centiury of His Britannic Majesty, by transmitting to him a note on the three points which were the subject of their conference of this day.

1. They have positive orders to require the renunciation of the title of King of France borne by His Britannic Majesty.

Lord Malmesbury is requested to observe that the question is not only of a renunciation of the rights which might be pretended to be derived from this title, but farther and formally of the title itself. The establishment of the French Republic, and the acknowledgment of this form of Government by the King of England, will not allow of his retaining a title which would imply the existence in France of an order of things which is at an end.

2. The Ministers Plenipotentiary of the Republic are ordered to demand the restitution of the vessels taken or destroyed at Toulon.

Great Britain has publicly and formally declared that these vessels were taken in trust for the King of France.—This trust is sacred. It incontestably belongs to the Republic, which exercises the rights and the sovereignty that Great Britain attributed to Louis XVII. at the period of the capture of Toulon. His Britannic Majesty cannot, therefore, in acknowledging the French Republic deny its right to the restitution required, or refuse either to make the restitution, or to offer an equivalent for it.

3. The Ministers Plenipotentiary have orders to demand, and do demand, the renunciation, on the part of His Britannic Majesty, of the mortgage on Belgium.

That country was mortgaged for the loans made by the Emperor in England. It has become an integral part of the French Republic, and cannot remain burthened with such a mortgage.

The Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic request Lord Malmesbury to accept the assurance of their high consideration.

(Signed) LE TOURNEUR.

Lisle, le 22 Messidor,
5th Year of the Republique,
July 10, 1797.

PLEVILLE LE PELLY.

HUGUES B. MARET.

COLCHEN, Sec. Gen. of Legat.

(No. 17.) Extract of a Dispatch from Lord Grenville to Lord Malmesbury, dated Downing-street, July 13, 1797.

With respect to the demands contained in the note transmitted to your Lordship by the French Ministers, they have been naturally received here with great surprise. On the subject of the Netherlands as connected with the Austrian loans, it is conceived that any explanation between his Majesty and the French government is wholly unnecessary. The loans raised in England for the service of the Emperor of Germany, and guaranteed by act of Parliament here, rest, as your Lordship will perceive by the annexed copy of the Convention on that subject, upon the security of all the revenues of all the hereditary dominions of His Imperial Majesty. They do not seem in any manner to come under the description contained in the sixth article of the preliminaries between Austria and France, respecting mortgages upon the soil of the Netherlands, on which ground alone France could have any pretence to interfere in the business.

Nor is this subject one which appears to be in any manner a fit point of discussion between His Majesty and the Republic; the King neither forms nor has any intention of forming any demand on the French Government

vernment for the payment of any part either of the interest or capital of those loans. It is to the Emperor alone that His Majesty looks for the performance of His Imperial Majesty's engagements to him, and it is upon the Austrian Government, and upon its revenues, that individuals concerned in those loans have claims of private right, and means of personal demand secured to them by the Convention.

On the other two points I have nothing to add to the observations which your Lordship has already made upon them; and we can therefore only wait with impatience for the answer to the *projet* delivered by your lordship, which will enable us to form a judgment on the intentions of the Government with whom we are treating.

Right Honourable Lord Malmesbury.

(No. 18.) Extract of a Dispatch from Lord Malmesbury to Lord Grenville, dated Lisle, 16th July, 1797.

It was at the express invitation of the French Plenipotentiaries that I met them on Thursday the 13th instant; *one of them* stated their motive for wishing to confer with me, not to be in consequence of any answer they had received from Paris on the subject of the *projet*, which he observed could not be expected so soon, but to resume the discussion on the article which he had objected to on my first reading the *projet*, and on which they conceived it was possible and even expedient to argue before we entered on the more important branches of the negotiation. It was Article II. that he referred to. He objected to the renewal of the treaties therein mentioned from various reasons; first, That many and even most of them were irrelevant to that we were now negotiating; secondly, That they were in contradiction to the new order of things established in France, as they seem to imply an acknowledgment that a portion of the regal authority is still existing; thirdly, That they might be supposed to apply to conventions and stipulations, in direct contradiction to their present form of Government, and he quoted the Convention of Pilnitz in particular. I was about to reply to him, and I trust in a way that would have done away his apprehensions on this point, when *another of them* interposed by saying, that their sincere and only desire was that the treaty we were now entering upon might be so framed, as to secure permanently the object for which it was intended: that no article likely to produce this end might be omitted, nor any doubtful one inserted: but that the whole, as well with regard to the past as to the future, might be so clearly and distinctly expressed, that no room for cavil might be left. This he assured me, in the name of his colleagues, was all that was meant by their objection to renew so many treaties, in which such various interests were blended, and so many points discussed foreign to the present moment. Their renewing them in a lump, and without examining carefully to what we were pledged by them, might involve us in difficulties much better to be avoided. I replied, that I admitted most certainly all he said, and that it was with this view and on this principle solely that the renewal of these treaties was proposed by his Majesty; and that if he recollected (as he undoubtedly did) the different wars which were terminated by these treaties, and the many important regulations stipulated by them, he would admit that the allowing them to remain in their full force was simply an acknowledgment of the tenure by which almost all the Sovereigns of Europe, and particularly the French Republic,

Republic, held their dominions up to this day. That these treaties were become the law of nations, and that infinite confusion would result from their not being renewed.

He replied, that our object was evidently the same, that we only differed as to the manner. I thought the renewing these treaties *in toto* would the best contribute to it: while they were inclined to think, that extracting from them every thing which immediately related to the interest of the two countries, and stating it in one article, was more likely to attain this desirable object. *The French Minister* again repeated, that their first wish was, that the treaty we were now making should be clear, distinct, solid, and lasting, and such a one as could not, at any future period, be broken through without a manifest violation of good faith. And I again repeated, that nothing could be so consonant to my orders, or the intentions of my royal master.

One of the *French Plenipotentiaries* was disposed to dwell on his objections, which were, that these treaties were signed when France was a monarchy, and that any retrospect to those times implied a sort of censure on their present form of Government; but this was arguing on such weak ground, and so incapable of being seriously maintained, that I, to avoid superfluous contradiction, was very willing to let it pass unnoticed. After a good deal of very conciliatory, and even amicable discussion, in which, however, neither party gave much way to each other, it was proposed by them that we should return home, to meet again as soon as was convenient after an attentive and deliberate perusal of these treaties, in order to state respectively our ideas on this subject. I observed, that although I was perfectly prepared to do it at the moment, and felt almost bold enough to affirm, that no measure could be devised which would so completely meet our intentions as an unreserved renewal of the treaties they hesitated about, yet I was very willing to acquiesce in their proposal, with this simple observation, that if any delay arose from it, such delay was imputable to them and not to me. My words were, "Je ne me rends pas responsable des Longueurs dans lesquelles cette discussion pourrait nous entraîner." *The French Minister's* answer was, "Si des longueurs servant à déterminer des objets qui pourraient donner lieu à des querelles à l'avenir, ce sera du tems bien employé." It was not my wish to contest this assertion, and our conference ended with it.

(No. 19) Extract of a Dispatch from Lord Malmesbury to Lord Grenville, dated Lille, July 16, 1797.

My Lord,

Yesterday at the moment I was preparing to attend the conference, in which we were to enter into full discussions on the litigated subject of the renewal of the treaties mentioned in the second article of the projet, I received from the French Legation the enclosed paper (A). In about an hour I returned the enclosed answer (B), to which I received the enclosed reply (C); and I am this moment come from the conference which has taken place in consequence of it.

I began by saying, that I had solicited this interview from the same motive which would actuate every part of my conduct; that I wished to make my reports not only correct but conciliatory as far as depended on me, and I now was come, in order, if possible, to obtain from them such comments and explanations on the note they sent to me yesterday, as would enable me, when I transmitted it to my Court, to secure the negotiation

negotiation from being interrupted, perhaps abruptly terminated, by the perusal of it. If I understood it right, it meant that the Directory requires as a *fine qua non Preliminary*, that every thing the King has conquered from all and each of his enemies should be restored, and that till this restoration was consented to the negotiation was not even to begin. I said, if I was correct in this statement, and the plain sense of the declaration would bear no other interpretation, I must add that it would not only most certainly prevent the treaty from beginning, but would leave no room for treating at all, since it deprived His Majesty of every means of negotiation; for I could not suppose that it was in their thoughts to intimate that the principle of the treaty, as far as it related to His Majesty, was to be one of all cession and no compensation, and yet that was precisely the position in which His Majesty was placed by their note.

One of the French Plenipotentiaries, who had let me proceed rather reluctantly, here stopt me, and said, that he and his colleagues were exceeding happy that I had expressed a wish to see them before I dispatch my messenger; that they wished to assure me that they had thought it dealing fairly and honourably to state what they had received from the Directory in the very words in which it came to them: that they should be sorry if the declaration they had been directed to make me, should be of a nature to interrupt, much less to break off, the negotiation: that it was the sincere wish of the Directory that the negotiation should proceed and end successfully; and that, far from shutting the door to farther discussions, they were perfectly ready to hear any proposals we had to make, and only wished that these proposals should be, if possible, such as were compatible with their most sacred engagements. I repeated what I had said, that no door was left open if His Majesty was *in limine* to restore every thing; and that a peace on these conditions would not be heard of by the country. I observed, that immediately on leaving them, I should dispatch a messenger; but what that messenger carried would most materially affect the progress and issue of the negotiation; I therefore desired to know whether, in consequence of what I had heard from them, I might consider the strict and literal meaning of the declaration not to be a decided negative (which it certainly seemed to imply) on all compensation whatever to be made to his Majesty, but that proposals tending to this effect would still be listened to. One of them answered, "Certainly, and if they should be found such as it will be impossible for us to admit, we will on our side bring forward others for your Court to deliberate on." Under this assurance, which at least, to a certain degree, qualifies the declaration of yesterday, I broke up the conference.

(No. 20. A.) Note from the French Plenipotentiaries to Lord Malmesbury.

The Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic have transmitted to their Government the project of the treaty, and the note relating thereto, which were delivered to them the 20th of the present month, by the Minister Plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty.

They have just received fresh communications and orders which require that they should make the following declaration to Lord Malmesbury.

There exist in the public and secret treaties, by which the French Republic is bound to its allies, Spain and the Batavian Republic, articles by

by which the three powers respectively guarantee the territories possessed by each of them before the war.

The French Government, unable to detach itself from the engagements which it has contracted by these treaties, establishes, as an indispensable preliminary of the negotiation for the peace with England, the consent of his Britannic Majesty to the restitution of all the possessions which he occupies, not only from the French Republic, but farther and formally of those of Spain and the Batavian Republic.

In consequence, the undersigned Ministers Plenipotentiary request Lord Malmesbury to explain himself with regard to this restitution, and to consent to it, if he is sufficiently authorized to do so; if not, and in the contrary case, to send a messenger to his Court, in order to procure the necessary powers.

The object of the conference which was to have taken place to-day being necessarily delayed by the purport of the above-mentioned declaration, the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the Republic have to express to Lord Malmesbury the regret that they feel in losing this opportunity of conversing together, which they had themselves solicited:—but in case Lord Malmesbury should have any communication to make to them, they beg him to believe that they will always be happy to receive him, and to listen to him, whenever he may think it proper.

They request him, at the same time, to accept anew the assurances of their high consideration.

(Signed)

Lille, 27 Messidor,
5th year of the Republic.
July 15, 1797.

LE TOURNEUR.

PLEVILLE LE PELLEY.

HUGUES B. MARET.

COLCHEN, Sec. Gen. of the Leg.

(No. 21. B.) Note from Lord Malmesbury to the French Plenipotentiaries.

The Minister Plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty has given the most serious attention to the note dated this morning, which he has received from the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic.

He has no hesitation in declaring to them, that his instructions by no means authorize him to admit, as a preliminary principle, that which their declaration seems intended to establish: nevertheless, being persuaded that it is his first duty not to give up the hopes of conciliation until he shall have exhausted every means of obtaining it, and being anxious to avoid, in the report which he shall have to make to his Court, the possibility of misunderstanding on a subject of such importance, he proposes to them a conference for to-morrow, at the hour most convenient to them, after which it is his intention to dispatch a messenger to his Court.

He requests the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic to accept the assurance of his high consideration.

Lille, 15th July, 1797.

(Signed)

MALMESBURY.

(No. 22. C.)

The Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic lose no time in acceding to the desire expressed by the Minister Plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty, of conferring with them on the subject of the note which they addressed to him this day.

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They have in consequence the honour of proposing to him to meet to-morrow morning at 11 o'clock, at the usual place of conference.

They request him to accept the assurances of their high consideration.

(Signed)

Lisle, the 27th Messidor,
5th Year of the Republic,
one and indivisible,

July 15, 1797.

LE TOURNEUR.

PLEVILLE LE PELLEY.

HUGUES B. MARET.

COLCHEN, Sec. Gen. of the Leg.

(No. 23.) Copy of a Dispatch from Lord Grenville to Lord Malmesbury, dated Downing-street, July 20, 1797.

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's dispatches by the messenger Dressins, were received here on the 17th instant, at night, and I lost no time in receiving his Majesty's commands on the very important subject of your letter, No. 9.

I am much concerned to be under the necessity of remarking that the claim brought forward in the note transmitted to your Lordship by the French Plenipotentiaries, is in itself so extravagant, and so little to be reconciled either with the former professions of those Ministers, or with their conduct in the previous stages of the negotiation, that it affords the strongest presumption of a determination to preclude all means of accommodation. If such is really the determination of the Directory, nothing can remain for this country, but to preserve in opposing, with an energy and spirit proportioned to the exigency, a system which must tend to perpetuate a state of war and civil tumult in every part of Europe.

The natural step upon the present occasion would therefore have been to direct your Lordship to terminate at once a negotiation, which, on the footing now proposed by the enemy, affords neither the hope nor the means of any favourable conclusion. Nothing being left for treaty, where, as a preliminary step, one party is required to concede every thing, and all compensation from the other is absolutely and at once precluded. His Majesty's servants have, however, observed that in the conclusion of your Lordship's conference with the French Plenipotentiaries on the subject of the note in question, the president of that mission informed your Lordship, that it was not intended to resist all compensation for the immense extent of restitution demanded from his Majesty, and for the other obvious circumstances of disadvantage to this country in the situation of Europe, as resulting from the war; and even added, that he and his colleagues would eventually bring forward proposals on this head for the deliberation of the King's Government. It appeared possible that some advantage might perhaps arise to the great object of peace, from grounding on this declaration a farther proceeding, such as might afford to the Directory (if they are so disposed) the means of replacing the negotiation on a more practicable footing. With the view, therefore, of leaving nothing untried which can contribute to restore peace on any suitable terms, His Majesty has been pleased to direct that your Lordship should for that purpose ask another conference with the French Plenipotentiaries. In this conference your Lordship will remark in such terms as the occasion must naturally suggest to you upon the indefensible spirit and tendency of the demand now made by France. You will observe that France, treating in conjunction with her allies, and in their name, cannot with any pretence of justice and fairness, oppose her treaties with them as an obstacle in the

the way of any reasonable proposal of peace in which they are to be included. In a separate negotiation, to which they were not parties, such a plea, might perhaps, have been urged; but in that case France would have been found to offer, from her own means, that compensation which she did not think herself at liberty to engage to obtain from her allies. And such was, in fact, as your Lordship must remember, the principle on which His Majesty offered to treat last year, when he was really bound, by engagements to Austria, similar to those which are now alledged by France. But it never can be allowed that France, Spain, and Holland, negotiating jointly for a peace with Great Britain, can set up, as a bar to our just demands, the treaties between themselves, from which they are at once able to release each other whenever they think fit.

You will farther remark, that even if, contrary to all reason, such a principle, could for a moment have been admitted on our part, still even that principle, inadmissible as it is, could only apply to public treaties, known to those who agreed to be governed by them, and not to secret articles, unknown even to the French Plenipotentiaries, or concealed by one of them from the knowledge of the others.

You will add in explicit, though not offensive terms, that the whole of this pretence now set up by France is incontestably frivolous and illusory; being grounded on a supposition of a state of things directly contrary to that which is known really to exist. It being perfectly notorious that both Spain and Holland, so far from wishing to continue the war, were compelled by France to engage in it, greatly against their own wishes; and to undertake, without the means of supporting it, a contest in which they had nothing to gain, and every thing to lose. It never therefore can be allowed to be a question of any possible doubt, but that the Directory, if they really wish it, must already have obtained, or could at any moment obtain, the consent of those powers to such terms of peace as have been proposed by His Majesty. If, however, France, from any motive of interest or engagement, is in truth desirous to procure for them the restitution of possessions which they were unable to defend, and have no means to re-conquer, the project delivered by your Lordship afforded an opening for this; those articles having been so drawn as to leave it to France to provide a compensation to His Majesty, either out of her own colonies, or out of those of her allies, respectively conquered by His Majesty's arms. The choice between these two alternatives may be left to the Directory; but to refuse both, is in other words, to refuse all compensation. This is nevertheless expressly declared not to be the intention of those with whom you treat. It is therefore necessary that your Lordship should demand from them a statement of the proposals which, as they informed you, they have to make, in order to do away this apparent contradiction, which the King's servants are wholly unable to reconcile by any suggestion of theirs, even if it were fitting and reasonable for them to bring forward any new proposals immediately after the detailed project which was delivered on the part of this country at the outset of the negotiation.

Since that project is not acceded to, we have evidently, and on every ground, a right to expect a counter project, equally full and explicit on the part of the enemy. You will therefore state to the French Ministers distinctly, that the only hope of bringing this business to a favourable conclusion, is by stating at once plainly, and without reserve,

the whole of what they have to ask, instead of bringing forward separate points one after the other, not only contrary to the avowed principle of the negotiation proposed by themselves, but, as it appears, even contrary to the expectation of the Ministers themselves who are employed on the part of France. There can be no pretence for refusing a compliance with this demand, if the Plenipotentiaries of France are disposed to forward the object of peace: and the obtaining such a statement from them is, as I have before stated to your Lordship, a point of so much importance, in any course which this negotiation may take, that it is the King's pleasure that your Lordship should use every possible endeavour to prevent their eluding so just a demand.

After what has passed, it is, I fear, very doubtful whether such a counter project would be framed on principles such as could be admitted here; but it would at all events place the business on its real issue, and bring distinctly into question, the several points on which the conclusion of peace, or the prolongation of war, will really depend.

(Signed) GRENVILLE.

(No. 24.) Copy of a Dispatch from Lord Grenville to Lord Malmesbury, dated Downing-street, July 20, 1797.

My Lord,

There are two separate points on which it is necessary for me to say a few words to your Lordship, in addition to the instructions in my other dispatch on the general subject of the negotiation.

The first relates to the assertion of one of the French Ministers, that the Portuguese ships and troops were at Toulon. The fact is very immaterial as to any conclusion that could be drawn from it, to affect the situation or just claim of the Court of Lisbon; because your Lordship well knows, that it is a principle universally recognized in the public law of Europe, that when one of the parties, in a defensive alliance, furnishes to his ally the stipulated succours, those succours remain entirely at the disposal of the requiring party to be employed wherever he shall judge proper, subject only to the limitations of the treaty which before existed; and if the amount of those succours is not increased beyond that engaged for, nor the means of using them extended by new facilities, the party furnishing the stipulated assistance is not understood to violate the laws of neutrality.

But the fact, in this case, will not bear out the assertion, even if the argument to be drawn from it were more conclusive. The troops of her Most Faithful Majesty having been, as I apprehend, no otherwise employed than in the two campaigns carried on by land, upon the southern part of the frontiers of France and Spain.

The other point relates to what was said to your Lordship about the treaty of Plinitz. It would certainly not require much argument to prove that the renewal of several treaties enumerated by name and date, and the latest of which was concluded in 1783, does not imply a renewal of another treaty supposed to be concluded in 1791. But what is more material to the present case is, that your Lordship should take this opportunity to explain, in the most distinct and unequivocal terms, that if any secret treaty was, in fact, concluded at the interview at Plinitz, between the late Emperor and the King of Prussia, (which is, to say the least, very doubtful in point of fact), this, at least, is certain, that His Majesty was no party to such treaty; and not only was not
then

then included in it, but has never since adhered to it, nor even been apprized of its contents. The public declaration which was made at that interview, shews on the face of it that His Majesty was no party to it; and it is, indeed, notorious that it applied to circumstances which were done away long before the war broke out between Austria and France, and that the subsequent negotiations for the maintenance of peace between those powers turned on points wholly distinct from those supposed to have been referred to in the pretended treaty of Plinitz.

This explanation, however little connected with the present negotiation, seems to be called for by the allusion made to you upon the subject; and, indeed, on a point on which so much misrepresentation has prevailed, it is useful not to omit the opportunity of stating the facts as they really are.

I am, &c.

(Signed)

GRENVILLE.

Right Honourable Lord Malmesbury.

(No. 25.) [Extract of a Dispatch from Lord Malmesbury to Lord Grenville, dated Lisle, 25th July, 1797.

MY LORD,

I have the honour to acknowledge your Lordship's dispatches, No. 19 and 20, of the 20th instant, which were delivered to me on Saturday the 22d instant, by the messenger Major.

It was impossible that the claim brought forward in the note inclosed in my No. 9, could have produced on your Lordship's mind any impression different from that which you describe; and I am happy to find, that the conduct I observed, when it was first delivered to me, was such as put it in my power to execute with great consistency the spirited instructions your Lordship now sends me.

Immediately on the arrival of the messenger, I proposed an interview with the French Plenipotentiaries; and we met on Sunday the 23d, at one P. M.

I could not obey his Majesty's orders in a manner more likely to command attention, and to impress those who heard me with a just sense of the mixture of firmness and moderation with which his Majesty was pleased to conduct this important negotiation, than by employing not only the substance, but, as far as was practicable in conversation, the very words of your Lordship's dispatch, No. 19; and if I should attempt to relate minutely what I myself said in this conference, it would, in fact, be little more than a repetition of them.

I began by observing, that I was certain the French Plenipotentiaries must be fully prepared for what I now had it in command to say: I reminded them, that I had taken upon me to affirm when we were last assembled, and immediately before I dispatched my messenger, that the requiring such a preliminary as that proposed in the note, was putting an end at once to all negotiation, and that I was sure peace on such Terms would not be heard of; that the orders I was then about to communicate to them would prove that I had not made this assertion lightly, or in consequence of any hasty opinion of my own; at the same time that it would also appear that my Royal Master was as anxiously and as sincerely inclined to listen to all reasonable and admissible conditions, as he was determined to repel and reject all such as were of an opposite description. I then, my Lord, took up my arguments

guments on the precise grounds set forth in your Lordship's No. 19. I neither omitted any thing, nor inserted any thing of my own, which could at all alter its spirit; and I only varied from the letter inasmuch as was necessary to make it applicable to a conference.

My first object was to state, in as forcible a way as possible, the utter inadmissibility of the pretension set forth in the note, the frivolous and illusory reasons alledged for bringing it forward, and I observed, that if it was persevered in, it must lead to this necessary conclusion, that there did exist when it was framed an intention on the part of the Directory to break off the negotiation in the outset. My second object, in point of reasoning, though a very primary one in point of importance, was either to prevent the negotiation breaking off at all, or if this was not to be prevented, to endeavour to be so clear and explicit in my language, and to draw the line so distinctly between such sacrifices as his Majesty might be inclined to make in order to restore so great a blessing as peace, and those to which the dignity of his crown, and interest of his subjects, would never allow him to attend, as to make it impossible that by any future cavil or subterfuge the interruption of the treaty, if unfortunately it should be interrupted, could be imputed to any other cause than the exorbitant demands of the French Government; and the better to insure this purpose, I explained to them that his Majesty having already in a detailed projet stated freely and fully his conditions, and these conditions having been at once rejected by a sweeping claim on the part of the French Government, it was not fitting nor reasonable, neither could it be expected that any new proposals should originate with his Majesty; and that on every ground the King had a right to expect a *contre-projet* from them, stating at once plainly, and without reserve, the whole of what they had to ask, instead of bringing forward separate points, one after another, directly contrary to the principle on which we had agreed to begin the negotiation, and which, from their being insulated, could only tend to protract and impede its progress.

On the first point, on the inadmissibility of the preliminary conditions as proposed by the French Government, *one of the French Plenipotentiaries* said, it was impossible for them to do more than to take it for reference, that the instructions they had received when the Directory sent them the note, were precise and positive; and that they had received none since. He therefore had on that point simply to request of me, that I would state in writing the several grounds on which his Majesty rejected this proposition, in order that the report transmitted by them to the Directory might be correct; and he assured me, that if I did not think it proper to put in writing all the arguments I had used to them in the conference, they would have no scruple of employing those I omitted in such a way as was the best calculated to give them weight, and to use *the French Minister's* own expression, to place the negotiation once more on its legs.

In regard to the second point, he had no hesitation in agreeing with me, that the best method, and indeed the only one, which could accelerate the whole of the business, was for them to give in a *contre-projet*, neither did he attempt to disprove our perfect right to expect one from them before we made any new proposals. But he said, that it was not necessary for him to observe that as long as they were bound by their instructions not to give way on the proposition I had now so decidedly rejected, that it was impossible for them to move a step without new orders

orders from the Directory; that they would ask for these orders immediately, and lose no time in acquainting me when they were received.

I observed, that in our last conference he had intimated to me they were empowered to come to some explanation with me on the subject of compensation to be made to his Majesty for the great cessions he was disposed to make; that, at the time, I conceived these explanations were of a nature to qualify the wide claim stated in the note, and that if I had abstained from pressing him farther at the moment, it was from perceiving a reluctance on their part to bring them forward:—That, however, if they really had such proposals to make me, and if they were of a nature to meet in substance and effect the basis laid down in the projet I had given, I should be well disposed to listen to them.

One of the French Ministers, after some hesitation, and a sort of silent reference to one of his colleagues, said he thought as matters now stood, it would be much better to wait their answer from Paris:—That it was a very important period, a crisis in the negotiation, the result of which probably would be conclusive as to its fate, and that it seemed to be of more consequence to make this result as conformable to what he hoped I was convinced were as much their wishes as mine, than to waste our time in discussions which were useless, not to say more, till this was ascertained.

I confined myself in my reply to saying, I had no objection whatever to giving to the French Plenipotentiaries a paper, stating the strong motives on which his Majesty rejected the proposition made in their note of the 15th; and that as I, on my part, had considered it a duty to make my reports as conciliatory as was consistent with truth and correctness, so I heard with great pleasure the assurances he gave me of their intending to observe the same line of conduct.

That as we seemed perfectly agreed as to the propriety of their producing a *contre-projet*, I had nothing to say on that point, except to express my most sincere wish that it would soon appear, and when it did appear, be such a one as would lead to a speedy and satisfactory conclusion of the negotiation.

Right Honourable Lord Grenville.

No. 26.) Note from Lord Malmesbury to the French Plenipotentiaries.

The Minister Plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty has transmitted to his Court the note which was delivered to him the 15th of this month, by the Minister Plenipotentiary of the French Republic; and having received the orders of the King-his Master, on this subject, he hastens to repeat to them, in writing, conformably to the desire which they have expressed to him, the following reflections, which he had already stated to them verbally, in consequence of his most positive instructions.

He observes, in the first place, that to require “As an indispensable preliminary of negotiation for peace with England, the consent of his Britannic Majesty to the formal restitution of all the possessions which he occupies, as well those of the French Republic, as farther and formally those of Spain and the Batavian Republic,” is to wish to establish a previous condition, which excludes all reciprocity, refuses

sues to the King all compensation, and leaves no object of ulterior negotiation.

That the French Republic formally authorized by its allies to negotiate the articles of peace in their name, cannot fairly set up its partial treaties with them, in opposition to reasonable proposals of peace, since it is universally understood that the contracting parties always preserve the power to modify, by mutual consent, the conditions by which they may be engaged to each other, whenever their common interests may require it:—consequently, the proposition made to the King of a general and gratuitous restitution as an indispensable preliminary, would necessarily impute to his Catholic Majesty, and to the Batavian Republic, dispositions far less pacific than those which animate the French Republic.

That, moreover, in consequence of what passed in the first conferences, Lord Malmesbury has always thought himself entitled to expect that the King his master would find a compensation for the sacrifices he was ready to make for peace, by retaining a part of his conquests; and he was the less able to foresee any obstacle, on account of the secret articles of the treaties which bind the French Republic, as the principle of compensation was acknowledged by a formal and positive declaration, made in the name of the Executive Directory, and communicated in an Official Note, dated the 27th of November 1796; a declaration, posterior to the completion of those treaties.

It was, therefore, in order to remove, as much as possible, every difficulty that, in the project of a treaty, which Lord Malmesbury has delivered to the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic, the alternative was left to France to settle this compensation on its own possessions, or on those of its allies; but the absolute refusal of this alternative appears to do away the only possible means of conciliating every interest, and of arriving at an honourable, just, and permanent peace.

Lord Malmesbury, persuaded that such cannot be the intention of the French Government, hopes, that in consequence of the reasons herein stated, a condition will not be insisted upon, to which his Britannic Majesty can by no means consent.

He again requests the Minister Plenipotentiary of the French Republic to accept the assurances of his high consideration.

Lille, 24th July, 1797.

(Signed)

MALMESBURY.

(No. 27.) Extract of a dispatch from Lord Malmesbury to Lord Grenville, dated Lille, Sunday, August 6th, 1797.

MY LORD,

I fully expected, when I received the inclosed Note on Friday, that the conference proposed was to acquaint me with the instructions the French Plenipotentiaries had received from the Directory, on the Note I had given in near a fortnight ago, as an answer to that in which the restitution of the whole of His Majesty's conquests from each of his enemies is required as an indispensable preliminary to all negotiation.

I was therefore surprized and disappointed, when I had taken my place at the conference, to hear from the French Plenipotentiaries that the letters they had received that morning from Paris did not bring any specific reply to my last note, but only went to inform them, that the Directory had taken the subject into their most serious consideration, and would acquaint them as soon as possible with the result.

I could not avoid expressing my concern and surprize that there existed any hesitation whatever in the mind of the Directory on a point, which, although very important, was certainly a very simple one: That to allow it to remain in doubt whether His Majesty was to have any compensation or not, was in other words to leave it in doubt whether the Directory sincerely meant peace or not? And that, although I was very far from wishing for any improper haste, or not to move in a matter of such magnitude with becoming prudence and deliberation, yet I could not forbear lamenting that more than a month had now elapsed without our having advanced a single step, notwithstanding His Majesty had, in the very outset of the negotiation, manifested a moderation and forbearance unprecedented under similar circumstances:—That anxious as I was not to prejudice it by any representations of mine, I must say, this delay placed me in a very awkward position, as I really did not perceive how I could account for it in a way at all satisfactory, at the same time that it was quite impossible for me to suffer a longer space of time to pass over without writing to my Court.

One of the French Plenipotentiaries expressed his earnest wish that I would write immediately; he was confident this delay would be seen in its true light; and added, “Si nous n’avançons pas à pas de Géant, j’espère que nous marchons d’un pas sur.”—And another of them repeated this phrase.

I expressed my sincere hope this might be the case, but it would have been much better proved by the communication of the counter projet they had in a manner pledged themselves to procure, than by any vague and indeterminate assurances of what might possibly be the result of the present suspension of all business. They observed to me that the counter projet would of course be (virtually) contained in their next instructions, and that their only motive for wishing to see me was, to convince me that this delay had neither originated with them, nor been occasioned at Paris, by any want of attention to this important business, or from any cause not immediately and closely connected with it.

I desired to know from them when they thought it probable they should receive positive and explicit instructions, whether in three, four, or five days? They said, it would probably be eight or ten. And *one of them* observed, that as our not meeting more frequently gave rise to many idle rumours and false reports, he would propose to me, if I had no objection, to meet every other day at two o’clock: that it was very possible that in our next two or three meetings we might have nothing material to say, but that we should get better acquainted with each other, and in our conversations mutually suggest ideas which might be of use.—I readily consented to this.

I had a conference again this morning. As I was very desirous of being enabled to transmit to your Lordship some more satisfactory account as to the motives of this delay, I again pressed the French Plenipotentiaries on this point. They each of them repeated what they had said before, and on my endeavouring to make them feel how impossible it was that His Majesty should not be hurt at this demur on so very simple a point, *One of them said*, you ought to augur favourably from it; your note was a refusal to agree to what was stated by the Directory in their instructions to us as a *sine qua non*: if the Directory were determined to persist in this *sine qua non*, they would have said so at once—“Je vous assure qu’il nous auroit promptement renvoyé le Courier,” were his words. The time they take to deliberate indicates beyond a

doubt that they are looking for some temperament, and it scarce can be doubted, that one will be found.—I said I was well pleased to hear him say this; but that still he must be aware that it would not be an easy task for me to make my dispatches to-day either interesting or satisfactory.

Another of the French Ministers said that he really believed that this would be the only great impediment we should have to encounter, that every thing would go on quickly and smoothly, and that I must admit the present to be a very important and difficult point in the negotiation. I agreed with him entirely as to its importance, but would not acquiesce as to its difficulty.

I am very sorry, my Lord, that in such a moment, and after waiting so long, I should not be able to send you more explicit and decisive assurances; but it is not in my power to compel the French Negotiators to move on faster. All I can do is by my conduct and language to take care that no part whatever of the imputation of delay should attach to me. I have, at every conference I have held, always declared my readiness to proceed, and I shall not fail to repeat this every time we meet.

Right Honourable Lord Grenville, &c. &c. &c.

(No. 28.) Note from the French Plenipotentiaries to Lord Malmesbury.

The Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic will be happy to have an opportunity of conversing for a few minutes with Lord Malmesbury; and they have in consequence the honour of proposing to him to meet them at two o'clock to-day, or at any other hour which may be more convenient to him, and which he will have the goodness to appoint.

They renew, with pleasure, to Lord Malmesbury the assurances of their high consideration.

(Signed) LE TOURNEUR.

Lisle, 17 Thermidor,
5th Year of the Republic,
Aug. 4, 1797.

HUGUES B. MARET.
COLCHEN, Sec. Gen. of the Legation of the Republic.
Aug. 4, 1797.

(No. 29.) Extract of a Dispatch from Lord Malmesbury to Lord Grenville, dated Lisle, Aug. 14, 1797.

MY LORD,

In consequence of the resolution we had come to, to meet on the days of the arrival of the post from Paris, our conferences for this last week have taken place regularly every other morning, except on Thursday the 10th of August, which being the anniversary of one of their national festivals the French Legation could not attend.

I have in mine, No. 17, given your Lordship an account of every thing which passed in these conferences, up to that of the 6th. On the 8th nothing was said at all worth transmitting, except an intimation flung out by *one of the French Plenipotentiaries*, that it would be necessary to take into consideration the rights of neutral nations on this occasion. But as he spoke very vaguely, and in general terms, I did not choose to press him for an explanation, as I consider it more judicious to avoid discussions on separate and collateral points, and not to enter

enter into negotiation till the whole can be brought under deliberation at once.

What passed on the 12th was rather more interesting. The return of Mr. Wesley afforded me a very natural opportunity of expressing the impatience with which an answer to my last Note was expected by my Court; that three weeks had now elapsed since its transmission, and that although I by no means wished to insinuate that due attention had not been paid to so very important a subject as that on which we were treating, yet I could not but greatly lament, that day after day should be allowed to pass away without our proceeding at all in the great business for which we were met. *One of the French Ministers* said, that it was impossible I could lament this delay more than they did; that they had already declared to me that it was occasioned by a wish not to create but to remove difficulties; and they could assure me positively, that the French Government had no other object in view, and that I should find, when once we began fairly to negotiate, we should proceed very rapidly.

I replied it was indeed very material to make good the time we had lost. *The French Minister* answered, you could not call it time lost if you knew how it was employed. On my expressing, by my manner, a wish to be informed, he went on, by saying, we will not scruple to tell you, though we feel we ought not yet to do it officially, that we are consulting with our allies; that we have communicated to them all that has passed here; we have stated that, unless they mean to continue the war, they must release us from our engagements, and enable us, to a certain degree, to meet your proposals.

The conference of to-day is this moment over. *One of the French Plenipotentiaries* informed me, that he had received this morning a letter from the President of the Directory, assuring him that in four or five days they would receive their final instructions; and he added of himself, that he trusted these would be such as would enable us to continue our work without any further interruption. I said, I hoped these instructions would be in substance a Counter Project, as I did not see how any thing short of one could enable us to proceed so rapidly as he described. He agreed with me entirely, and assured me, that both he and his colleagues had repeatedly stated the necessity of a Counter Project being sent them; and he observed, that he really thought the French Government might have foreseen every thing which had passed, and been prepared with one; and that this would have saved a great deal of valuable time. As I could not myself have said more, I readily gave a full assent to what I heard.

(No. 30.) Extract of a Dispatch from Lord Grenville to Lord Malmesbury, dated Downing-Street, August 19, 1797.

An expression mentioned in one of your Lordship's last dispatches to have fallen from one of the French Plenipotentiaries, leads to the presumption that is intended, on the part of France, to bring forward some proposal about the navigation of neutral powers in time of war. Your Lordship will best judge of the proper opportunity of expressing His Majesty's decided and unalterable resolution on this point, not to admit of any proposal for treating with his enemies on the subject of the rights or claims of neutral powers.

The only other remark with which I have to trouble your Lordship by this Messenger, relates to an expression in the late message of the

Directory to the Council of Five Hundred, which, if literally taken, conveys an accusation against His Majesty's Government, that some delay has arisen on the part of this country in the negotiations at Lisle. This is so avowedly contrary to the fact, that it must be considered as impossible that such a charge could be intended to be made by a Government which had at that moment delayed for three weeks making any answer to His Majesty's distinct and liberal proposals of peace, and whose Plenipotentiaries were daily apologizing to your Lordship for this unbecoming, and as they almost confess, unaccountable delay; but as the point is too important to be left unnoticed, it is the King's pleasure that your Lordship should present a note, remarking upon the sense to which these words are liable, expressing your persuasion that such cannot be the intention with which they were used, but asking on the part of your Court an explanation to that effect, which cannot be refused without a violation of every thing which truth and justice require on such an occasion.

(No. 31.) Extract from the Message of the French Directory to the Council of Five Hundred, August 9, 1797.

In short, this cause is in the same despondency in which all good citizens, and particularly the defenders of the country are, at seeing deferred at the very moment when its conclusion was thought to be near at hand, and after having bought it with so much blood and so much suffering—a definitive peace, which the heads of the vanquished coalition at length solicited in good earnest, when its conclusion was expected, and which a Government friendly to humanity, were still more earnest to conclude: when, all on a sudden, buoyed up with new hopes, reckoning upon a general dissolution of the government, by the falling of its finances, upon its destruction, upon the death or banishment of its bravest generals, and upon the dispersion and loss of its armies, these very same coalesced powers have thrown as much delay into the negotiations, as they had shewn anxiety to bring them to an end.

(No. 32.) Copy of a Dispatch from Lord Malmesbury to Lord Grenville, dated Lisle, August 22, 1797.

My Lord,

In my conference of this morning, I took an opportunity of remarking to the French Plenipotentiaries on the very unfair and extraordinary assertion which had appeared in the message of the 9th instant, from the Directory to the Council of Five Hundred, viz: "*que les Puissances coalisées ont mis autant de Lenteur dans les negotiations, qu'elles avoient montré de l'Ardeur pour les terminer.*" I observed to them, that I had orders from my Court to ask a precise explanation, whether this accusation of delay was meant to apply to the manner in which His Majesty had conducted the negotiation at Lisle, and if it was so meant, to declare that no accusation was ever more destitute of foundation, nor a wider deviation from the real fact. I said I was perfectly ready to abide by their determination on this point, convinced that it was impossible for them not to acknowledge that the delay (if there had been any blameable delay) rested with the French Government and not with His Majesty. The French Plenipotentiaries admitted this to be most strictly true; that the phrase I had quoted was an ill-judged one, and *mal rédigée*; but that it could not in any point of view whatsoever be construed

as applying to England, and they were ready to say, that when it was written, the Directory alluded solely to the Court of Vienna; that they could assure me they had been very faithful in their reports, and that when they said this it was saying in other words, that I had carried on the negotiation with as much expedition as possible, and that if it had proceeded slowly for this last month, the slowness arose on their side and not on mine.

I said I could not for an instant call in question their feelings on this point; it was the insinuation conveyed in the message, and which had gone over Europe, that it was necessary for me to clear up, and to know whether the Directory thought and felt as they did. *One of the French Ministers*, with very strong expressions, assured me the Directory certainly did think and feel like them; that no unfair or insidious allusion was meant, and added, "que ce message etoit fait pour stimuler les *Conseils*." I went on by observing it was very essential for me to have this fully explained, and that I should give them in a note to this effect; they requested I would not, it would lead to disagreeable discussions, and would not answer the end I proposed. They would take upon themselves *now* to assure me in the name of the Directory, that nothing at all similar to the construction I put on the phrase was intended, and that as soon as they could receive an answer to the report they should make of to-day's conversation, they would say the same from the Directory itself.

I hope, my Lord, I have, therefore, by obtaining this very precise and formal disavowal of any intention to fix any imputation of delay on His Majesty's Government, fulfilled the object of my instructions on this particular point. If when the French Plenipotentiaries speak from the Directory the disavowal should not be equally satisfactory and complete, I then will not fail, according to your Lordship's order, to give in a note.

Rt. Hon. Lord Grenville.

(Signed)

MALMESBURY.

(No. 33.) Extract of a Dispatch from Lord Malmesbury to Lord Grenville, dated Lisle, August 22, 1797.

The four conferences I have held with the French Plenipotentiaries, since I last wrote to your Lordship on the 14th instant, will not, I fear, furnish very interesting materials for the dispatch.

Our conference of this morning was principally employed in what I have related in my other dispatch; but the French Plenipotentiaries assured me, that by Thursday, or at the latest by Saturday, they expected to receive their long-expected messenger.

(No. 34.) Extract of a Dispatch from Lord Malmesbury to Lord Grenville, dated Lisle, August 29, 1797.

I am extremely sorry to be forced to announce to your Lordship, that fresh delays occur in the progress of the negotiation.

The French Plenipotentiaries informed me at our conference yesterday, that the last answer from Holland was so unsatisfactory, that the Directory had ordered the Minister for Foreign Affairs to return it to the Dutch Ministers at Paris; that the Dutch Ministers could not take upon themselves to alter it in the way the Directory had proposed, but had been obliged to refer to their Government for new orders; and that therefore, supposing no time to be lost in deliberation on this subject at
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the Hague, it would be at least a week from to-day before any farther account could be received here.

After lamenting this unexpected procrastination of our business, I expressed a wish to know what the Dutch answer had been, what objections the Directory had made to it, and the alteration they were desirous it should undergo.

One of the French Plenipotentiaries said, it had not been communicated to them, but that he understood it was *complexe, louche et peu satisfaisante*. —That the Directory expected it should be clear and distinct, and such an one as would enable them to send such instructions here, as would allow us to go on with the negotiations in a way to recover the time we had lost.

(No. 35.) Extract of a Dispatch from Lord Malmesbury to Lord Grenville, dated Lisle, September 5, 1797.

My Lord,

I should have considered what has passed in our conferences since I last had the honour of writing to your Lordship by Mr. Wesley, as in itself too unimportant to authorize me to dispatch a messenger, but that in general I think it my duty never to leave your Lordship more than a week without hearing from me; and I was also glad of an opportunity to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's dispatch, No. 23, which was delivered to me by the messenger Shaw on the 31st August, at 10 P. M.

Nothing but common conversation passed in our conferences of the 30th of August and of the 1st of September. In that of the 3d the French Plenipotentiaries confirmed what they had taken upon themselves to assure me on the 22d August, in consequence of the representation I had your Lordship's orders to make on the expressions employed by the Directory in their message of the 9th August to the Councils, and which expressions appeared to fix an imputation of delay on His Majesty's Government in the progress of the negotiation. They said that they had reported to the Directory what I observed on this subject, and that they were now charged to repeat what I had already heard from them, and to declare that no intention similar to that I supposed ever existed on the part of the Directory.

In our conference of this morning, although I had reason to expect that the answer from the Hague was arrived at Paris, yet it was not admitted by the French Plenipotentiaries.

(No. 36.) Extract of a Dispatch from Lord Malmesbury to Lord Grenville, dated Lisle, 9th September, 1797.

I need not say that the two conferences which have been held since I dispatched the messenger (Brooks) were not likely, under the present circumstances of this country, to afford any thing extremely important or interesting.

In that of Thursday the 7th, one of the French Plenipotentiaries began, on my entering the room, by announcing a wish that the great event which had taken place at Paris should not interrupt for a long time our negotiation, or destroy the pleasing prospect we had of its soon terminating successfully; and from his manner I clearly saw he meant to convey the idea that it was his opinion it would not. I endeavoured to discover whether he spoke in consequence of any private intelligence he

he had received from Paris, or simply from his own private judgement, and I found it was entirely from the latter.

In our conference of this morning, he said they were still without any letters from M. Talleyrand (which rather surprised him); but he could assure me *with certainty*, that by Monday they should be empowered to go on with the negotiation, and that I might safely say so to my Court.

(No. 37.) Extract of a Dispatch from Lord Grenville to Lord Malmesbury, dated Downing Street, Sept. 11, 1797.

Your Lordship's dispatches by the messenger, Shaw, were received here this morning.

It would be premature in the present moment, to enter into any reasoning on the effect which the extraordinary events at Paris may be expected to have on the important negotiation with which your Lordship is charged. A very few days must now probably shew, in the most unequivocal manner, what are the views which are entertained by the now predominant party at Paris, respecting the question of peace or war with Great Britain: and it becomes His Majesty's Government to wait the event with the same desire for accommodation on reasonable terms, and the same firmness with respect to undue and insulting demands, which has actuated every part of the conduct held by your Lordship.

(No. 38.) Copy of a Dispatch from Lord Malmesbury to Lord Grenville, dated Lille, Monday, Sept. 11, 1797.

MY LORD,

On my going to the conference this morning, the French Plenipotentiaries informed me that the whole French Legation was recalled, and that Messrs. Treilhard and Bonnier d'Alco were appointed in their room. They said, their orders were to communicate this event to me immediately, and at the same time to add, in the name of the French Government, that this alteration, in the choice of the Negotiators, would not produce any whatever in the disposition of the Directory, to bring the negotiation to a happy issue.

I assured them I was extremely sorry to hear that they were recalled. That we had hitherto acted together so cordially, that it was to be lamented any circumstances had arisen which made the French Government think it adviseable to put the negotiation into other hands.

That I received with satisfaction what they told me as to the sentiments manifested by the Directory, relative to the negotiation, and that I could assure them, they were such as certainly existed in the breast of my Royal Master.

I then suggested to them, whether it would not be proper to give me an official note on this occasion, since it made a very marked period in the negotiation; and as they perfectly agreed with me on the propriety of this, they sent me that I now enclose.

I consider this event as so material, that I do not lose a moment in dispatching one of my servants to England, as I have at present no messenger with me. I have the honour to be, &c,

(Signed)

MALMESBURY.

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(No. 39.) Note from the French Plenipotentiary to Lord Malmesbury.

The Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic have the honour to inform Lord Malmesbury that they have received by this day's post, a decree of the Executive Directory, signifying their recall, and the nomination of Citizens Treilhard and Bonnier to succeed them, and to continue the negotiations entered upon with England.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, in sending to the undersigned Ministers Plenipotentiary this decree of the Directory, of the 22d of this month, orders them to wait the arrival of their successors. It also directs them to inform the Minister Plenipotentiary of His Britannic Majesty, that the change of the Negotiators does not carry with it any change in the disposition of the Directory, with regard to the negotiation.

The Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic have the honour to renew to Lord Malmesbury the assurances of their high consideration.

Lille, 25 Fructidor,
5th year of the Republic,
Sept. 11, 1797.

(Signed) **LE TOURNEUR.**
HUGUES B. MARET.
COLCHEN, Sec. Gen. of the Leg.

(No. 40.) Note.—From Lord Malmesbury to the French Plenipotentiaries.

The Minister Plenipotentiary of His Britannic Majesty has the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the note which the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic have addressed to him, communicating the decree of the Executive Directory, which signifies their recall and the nomination of the Ministers destined to succeed them, and to continue the negotiations already commenced. He receives at the same time with satisfaction, and will transmit without delay to his Court, the assurance that this change of the Negotiators does not bring with it any change in the disposition of the Directory as to the negotiation.

Lord Malmesbury, in thanking the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic for this communication, begs them to be persuaded of his personal regret on account of their departure, and to accept the assurances of his high consideration.

Lille, Sept. 12, 1797.

(Signed) **MALMESBURY.**

(No. 41.) Extract of a Dispatch from Lord Malmesbury to Lord Grenville, dated Lille, 17th September, 1797.

MY LORD,

The new French Plenipotentiaries, Messrs. Treilhard and Bonnier d'Alco, with their principal Secretary M. Derche, and two private Secretaries, arrived here at five o'clock A. M. on Wednesday the 13th instant, at eleven A. M. they sent M. Derche to acquaint me with their arrival, and to enquire at what hour I would receive their visit. In consequence of my saying whenever it was convenient to them, they came immediately, attended by Messrs. Le Tourneur, Maret and Colchen.

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On taking leave, M. Le Tourneur came forward and said to me, in his name and that of his colleagues, that they could not terminate their mission without expressing the satisfaction they had felt from the openness and candour (*Loyauté et Franchise*) with which I had acted during the whole of the negotiation, or take leave of me, without expressing their sincere personal regrets; that the recollection of my conduct would always be agreeable to them, and that it had given me the strongest title to their esteem and good wishes.

After giving the new Plenipotentiaries as much time as was necessary to return to their own house, I sent Mr. Rofs to ask at what hour I might return their visit; and, in consequence of their answer, I went to them, attended by Lord Morpeth and Mr. Ellis.

I took an opportunity of returning the compliment M. Le Tourneur had made me; and I must in justice repeat, my Lord, what I have already said, that his conduct and that of his colleagues has, in every point which has depended on them, been perfectly fair and honourable, and in no instance contrary to the principles they announced, and the professions they made. It is therefore impossible for me not to regret them, and not to consider the change of Negotiators at least as a very unpleasant, if not a very unfortunate incident.

(No. 42.) Copy of a Dispatch from Lord Malmesbury to Lord Grenville, dated Lisle, 17th September, 1797.

MY LORD,

I shall endeavour in this dispatch to give your Lordship as circumstantial an account as my memory will allow me to do, of what has passed in the two conferences I have held with the new French Plenipotentiaries.

In that of Friday the 14th, after communicating to me the arrêté of the Directory appointing them to succeed Messieurs Le Tourneur and Maret, and empowering them to continue the negotiation with me, *one of them* began by the making the strongest assurances of the sincere desire entertained by the Directory for peace. He observed, that if this desire had manifested itself so strongly at a moment when the two great authorities of the country were at variance, it must naturally become stronger and be exerted with more effect when all spirit of division was suppressed and when the Government was strengthened by the perfect concord which now reigns between all its branches: that the first and most material point to be ascertained in every negotiation was the extent of the full powers with which the negotiators are vested; that I should find theirs to be very ample; and that, as it was necessary to the success of our discussions that mine should be equally so, they had it in command to present a note, the object of which was to enquire, whether I was authorized to treat on the principle of a general restitution of every possession remaining in His Majesty's hands, not only belonging to them, but to their allies: that I was not unacquainted with their laws and with their treaties; that a great country could not on any occasion act in contradiction to them; and that, aware as I must be of this, I could not but expect the question contained in the note, neither could I conceive the requisition of an explicit answer, previous to entering upon the negotiation, as arising from any other motive than that of the most perfect wish, on the part of the Directory, to bring it to a successful, and, above all, to a speedy conclusion.

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I replied,

I replied, that if after what I heard I could allow myself to hope for such an event as he seemed to think probable, or give any credit to the pacific dispositions he announced on the part of the French Government, such hope must arise solely from the confidence I might place in his assurances; since the measure itself now adopted by the Directory was certainly calculated to make a directly contrary impression on my mind; that I could not conceal from him, that far from expecting such a question, its being now put surprized me beyond measure, and still more so, when from his comment upon it I was to infer, that he wished me to consider it as tending to promote a speedy pacification: that the question expressed in the note he had delivered (for he had given it to me, and I had read it over as he ended his speech) was word for word the same as that put to me by his predecessors so long ago as the 14th of July; that on the 15th I had, from my own authority, given an answer, and that this answer I confirmed fully and distinctly by order of my Court on the 24th July; that these notes had to the present hour remained unnoticed, and a delay of two months had occurred; that the reasons assigned for this delay were, as I was repeatedly told, a decided resolution on the part of the French Government to listen to the reasonable proposals made by His Majesty; but that being bound by their engagements with the Court of Madrid and the Batavian Republic, and wishing to treat their allies with due consideration, they were desirous of consulting with them previous to any positive declaration, and obtaining from them a voluntary release from those engagements sufficient to enable the French Plenipotentiaries here to admit the basis His Majesty had established, and to ground on it all future discussions which might arise in the course of the negotiation; that if he had read over the papers left, undoubtedly, in his possession by his predecessors, he would find what I stated to be strictly true; and that of course it could not be difficult to account for my surprize, when, after being told that he and his Colleague were to take up the negotiation precisely where they found it, it now became evident that it was to be flung back to the very point from which we started, and flung back in a way which seemed to threaten a conclusion very different from that he foretold.

I shall not attempt to follow the French Minister through the very elaborate and certainly able Speech he made in Reply, with a view to convince me that the enquiry into the extent of my Full powers was the strongest proof the Directory could furnish of their pacifick intention, and the shortest road they could take to accomplish the desired end. It was in order to give activity to the negotiation, (*activer* was his Word), and to prevent its stagnating, that this demand was made so specifically; and he intimated to me, that it was impossible for the Directory to proceed till a full and satisfactory answer had been given to it. I interrupted him here, by saying, their manner of acting appeared to me calculated to decide the negotiation at once, not to give it activity, since it must be known, I could not have powers of the description he alluded to; and even supposing I had, the admitting it would be in fact neither more or less than a compleat avowal of the principle itself, which once agreed on, nothing would be left to negotiate about. The other French Plenipotentiary interposed here, by saying, *that would not be the Case; many Articles would still remain to be proposed, and many points for important discussion.* I said, every Word
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I heard seemed to present fresh difficulties. Without replying to me, the *first-mentioned Minister* went on by endeavouring to prove, that the avowal of having powers to a certain extent, did not imply the necessity of exercising them; that it was the avowal alone for which they contended, in order to determine at once the form the negotiation was to take; that the note, and the time prescribed in it, were in consequence of the most positive orders from the Directory; and that if I drew from it a conclusion different from the assurances they had made me in the name of the Directory, I did not make the true inference. I replied, that, although the prescribing the day on which the question was to put me as the term within which I was to give my answer to it, was both a very unusual and abrupt mode of proceeding, yet as a day was much more than sufficient for the purpose, I should forbear making any particular remark on this circumstance: that as to the inference to be drawn from the positive manner in which they appeared to maintain the question put to me, I really could not make it different from that I had already expressed: that the reverting, after an interval of two months, to a question already answered, and which question involved the fate of the negotiation, certainly could not be considered as wearing a very conciliatory appearance: that in regard to my answer, it could not be different from that I had given before: that my full powers, which were in their hands, were as extensive as any could be, and it did not depend on me to give them more or less latitude; but that in fact their question went not to the extent of my full powers, but to require of me to declare the nature of my instructions; and on this point they certainly would forgive me if I did not speak out till such time as the circumstances of the negotiation called upon me to do it.

The French Minister strove to prove to me, what he had before attempted, that the claiming a right of the enquiry into the nature of the discretionary authority confided in a Minister, by no means implied an intention of requiring of him to act up to it to its utmost limits. I observed, if no such intention existed, why institute the enquiry? and if it did exist, why not say so at once?—He said, what we now ask is little more than a matter of form; when you have given us your answer, we shall follow it up by another step, which we are ordered to take. I said, my answer was given two months ago; that although I was ready to give it them again, and in writing, as one to their note, yet, as it could not be different, I did not see why they should not proceed immediately to the other step, by which I was told the question was to be followed up. It would be premature, said *the French Minister*; but in drawing up your answer, do not forget the force of the arguments I have used, or in your report to your court, the assurances we have given of the earnest wish of the Directory to terminate the war.

I replied, that I still must maintain, that from the manner in which they thought proper to define full powers, I could see no Distinction between acknowledging the power and admitting the principle; and that the question itself could not be put with any other intention—(Your Lordship will observe, from the subsequent notes which passed between us, that I was perfectly grounded in this assertion)—that in my reports, they might be fully assured I should act up to that conciliatory spirit, which, from the earliest period of the negotiation, had always decided my conduct; and that, inauspicious as appearances

were, I certainly would be careful not to make them look *hostile*. At the word *hostile*, both the French Plenipotentiaries were most warm in their protestations, that nothing could be less so; that the idea of the negotiation breaking off was as far from their thoughts as from their wishes. I said, that although I heard this with pleasure, yet I could not avoid adverting to facts, and that, when instead of an answer, and the favourable answer which I had every reason to expect, I received only the repetition of a demand, which had been already satisfied two months ago; I certainly could not think this a good omen. If it did not bode an immediate rupture of the treaty, it assuredly did not announce a near and successful termination of it. *The above-mentioned Minister* persisted I was mistaken; that the business would end speedily; that speed was their wish, and speed with peace for its object.

On breaking up our conference, I said, that I took it for granted we should meet again at the usual hour, on Sunday. *He* said, that it perhaps might not be necessary, but that they certainly would let me know in time; and this conveyed to me the first idea of what has since taken place.

I inclose your Lordship the note A, I received in this conference from the French Plenipotentiaries, and the answer B, which I made to it yesterday morning at 10 A. M.

At 6 P. M. the note C was transmitted to me; to which at 8 P. M. I returned the answer D, by Mr. Rofs, whom I sent in order that he might bring me the passports I asked for; but at a quarter before 10 P. M. M. Derché, Secretary of the French Legation, delivered to me the paper marked E; and this morning at 9 A. M. I replied by the note F, which immediately produced that marked G.

The notes sent me by the French Plenipotentiaries speak for themselves; and it is unnecessary to enter into any reflexions on them. I am willing to hope that the answers I have made were such as became the situation in which I stand, the importance of the cause intrusted to me, and the steady but temperate conduct which the spirit of my instructions injoin me to hold.

It was my wish to give every opening to the French Plenipotentiaries to recal the violent step they had taken; and, if possible, to convince them of its extreme impropriety. And it was with this view, and with a most anxious desire not to exclude all hope of the restoration of Peace, that I determined on suggesting the idea of our meeting once more before I left Lille.

This meeting took place to-day at noon; I opened it by observing, That the several notes they had received from me since the preceding evening had been too expressive of the surprize I felt at the measure the Directory had thought proper to adopt, to make it necessary for me to enlarge upon it in this conference; and indeed my sole motive for suggesting that it might be for our mutual satisfaction that it should be held, was, because this measure appeared to me to be in such direct contradiction to the very strong assurances I had so constantly and repeatedly heard from them, and to the pacific intentions with which they declared they were sent, that it was my earnest wish (before I considered their conduct as forcing me to a step which must so materially affect the success of the negotiation), to be perfectly certain that I understood clearly and distinctly the precise meaning of their official notes. On their admitting that nothing could be more reasonable than that I should,

should, on so important a point, require explanation, or more satisfactory to them than to give it me (as far as lay in their power), I proceeded by saying, that it appeared to me that I was called upon to produce immediately my full powers, or rather my instructions (for however different these were in themselves, in their demand they seemed constantly blended), and that if either I refused to consent to this, or if on consenting to it, it was found that I was not authorized to treat on the principle they laid down, I was then in the space of twenty-four hours to leave Lille, and return to my Court; and that I was required to obtain full authority to admit this principle, if it was wished the negotiation should proceed. This I said appeared to me to be the evident sense of the notes, and I begged to know whether I had mistaken it or not. One of the French Plenipotentiaries said, "You have understood it exactly; I hope you equally understand the intention of the French Government, which is to accelerate peace by removing every obstacle which stands in its way."

I replied, that having now no doubt left on my mind as to their exact meaning, and being quite sure notwithstanding the observation they had made, *que j'aurais saisi la véritable Intention de leur Note*, it would, I feared, be a very unprofitable employment of our time to argue either on the nature of the principle they announced as a *sine qua non*, to even a preliminary discussion, or on the extreme difficulty of reconciling the peremptory demand with which they opened their mission, to the pacific professions that accompanied it; that if they were determined to persist in this demand, it was much better to avoid all useless altercation; and nothing in that case remained for me to do, but to ask for my passports, and to signify to them my intention of leaving France at an early hour next morning. They said, they had their hands tied by an Arrêt of the Directory, and were bound to observe, the conduct they had followed by the most positive orders; and although we remained together some time longer, not a hint dropped from them expressive of a wish that, instead of going myself for new instructions, I should either write for them by a messenger, or obtain them by sending to England one of the gentlemen who are with me. I endeavoured by every indirect means to suggest to them the necessity of adopting some such modification, if they meant that their wishes for peace, in the expression of which they were this morning more eager than ever, should meet with the slightest degree of credit: I again brought to their recollection that I was authorized to receive any proposal, any *contre-projet* they tendered to me, but that they must be aware that it was not possible for me to alter the orders I had received, or to assume an authority with which I was not invested. I dwelt particularly and repeatedly on my being competent to take any thing they said for reference; but this availed nothing, except drawing from one of them a remark, that the full powers which authorized a Minister to hear proposals, were widely different from those which would enable him to accede to them; and that it was such full powers that the Directory required me to solicit.

An easy answer presented itself to this mode of reasoning; but I saw no advantage to be derived from prolonging a conversation, which, after the positive declaration they had made, could lead to nothing: I therefore ended the conference by declaring my resolution to begin my journey at a very early hour the next morning, and by saying, that
immediately

Immediately on my arrival in England I would make an exact report of every thing that had passed since their arrival.

I trust, my Lord, I shall not incur censure for having declined to offer in distinct terms to wait at Lille till I could know his Majesty's pleasure on the peremptory proposal made to me : But when I considered the nature of the proposal itself, the avowal *that this would not be the last*, nor perhaps the most humiliating condition required of us, and the imperious style with which I was enjoined to depart in twenty-four hours, it was utterly impossible for me to assume a language or affect a manner that could be interpreted into solicitation or entreaty : I felt myself called upon to treat the whole of this extraordinary proceeding with calmness and temper ; and notwithstanding the deep and poignant concern I must feel at an event which I fear will remove all probability of an immediate pacification, I trust that in the expression of this sentiment I have not used a language unbecoming the character with which I am invested, or the greatness of the Sovereign and Country whose dignity and interests it is my primary duty to consult and to maintain.

I have the honour to be
with great respect, my Lord,
your Lordship's most obedient
humble servant,

(Signed) MALMESBURY.

Right Hon. Lord Grenville.

(No. 43. A.) Note. From the French Plenipotentiaries to Lord Malmesbury.

The undersigned Ministers Plenipotentiaries of the French Republic, commissioned to treat of peace with England, have the honour to assure Lord Malmesbury, Minister Plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty, that the French Government wishes as sincerely, as strongly as ever, a peace, desired by the two nations : but, unable to conclude any other peace than such a one as is founded on the laws and on the treaties which bind the French Republic, persuaded that, to arrive at this end, it is necessary to explain itself with entire frankness, and desirous of giving to the negotiation the greatest rapidity, the Executive Directory has expressly charged the undersigned to demand of Lord Malmesbury, whether he has sufficient powers for restoring, in the treaty which may be concluded, to the French Republic and to its Allies, all the possessions which, since the beginning of the war, have passed into the hands of the English.

The undersigned are equally charged by the Executive Directory to demand from Lord Malmesbury an answer in the course of the day. They request him to accept the assurances of their high consideration.

(Signed) TREILHARD,
BONNIER.

Lille, 29 Fructidor,
5th year of the Republic.
(Sept. 15, 1797.)

By the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the
French Republic, the Sec. Gen.

DERCHÉ,

(No. 44.)

(No. 44. B.) Note from Lord Malmesbury to the French Plenipotentiaries.

The undersigned Minister Plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty receives with great satisfaction the expression of the sincere desire for peace, which the Ministers Plenipotentiaries of the French Republic announced to him yesterday in the name of their government. He has the honour to assure them that the King his master is animated with the same desire, and has nothing more at heart than to put an end to the calamities of the war.

With regard to the question which the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic addressed to Lord Malmesbury, concerning the extent of his full powers, he considers himself as having already given the most unequivocal answer upon this subject, in the two notes which he delivered to their predecessors on the 15th and 24th of July.

However, to avoid all misunderstanding, he renews the declaration which he made yesterday; that is to say, that he neither can or ought to treat upon any other principle than that of compensations; a principle which has been formally recognized as the basis of a treaty equally just, honourable, and advantageous to the two powers.

Lord Malmesbury requests the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic to accept the assurances of his high consideration.

(Signed) MALMESBURY.

Lisle, Saturday 16th September, 1797.
10 A. M.

(No. 45. C.) Note from the French Plenipotentiaries to Lord Malmesbury.

The Ministers Plenipotentiaries of the French Republic, commissioned to treat of peace with England, have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the answer of Lord Malmesbury to the note which was presented to him in the conference of yesterday.

It appears from this answer, and from the two notes of the 15th and 24th of July, to which it refers, that Lord Malmesbury has not powers for agreeing to the restitution of all the possessions which his Britannic Majesty occupies, whether from the French Republic, or from its allies.

In consequence, while they reiterate to Lord Malmesbury the most positive assurances of the sentiments of the French Government, the undersigned apprise him of a decree of the Executive Directory, which signifies that, in case Lord Malmesbury shall declare himself not to have the necessary powers for agreeing to all the restitutions which the laws and the treaties which bind the French Republic, make indispensable, he shall be to return, in four-and-twenty hours, to his Court, to ask for sufficient powers. Lord Malmesbury can see in this determination of the Executive Directory nothing else than an intention to hasten the moment when the negotiation may be followed up with the certainty of a speedy conclusion.

The Ministers Plenipotentiaries of the French Republic request Lord Malmesbury to accept the assurance of their high consideration.

(Signed) TREILHARD.
BONNIER.

By the Ministers Plenipotentiaries, the Sec. Gen. of the Legation,
DERCHE.

Lisle, 30 Fructidor, 5th Year of the
Republic. (Sept. 16, 1797.)

(No. 46.

(No. 46. D.) Note from Lord Malmesbury to the French Plenipotentiaries.

The undersigned Minister Plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty has the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the note of this day, which has been sent him by the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic.

Whatever regret he may experience at seeing the hope of a speedy conciliation thus destroyed, he can return no other answer to a refusal so absolute to continue the negotiation on grounds which appeared to have been already agreed upon, than by demanding the necessary passports for himself and his suite, in order that they may set off within the four-and-twenty hours, and return immediately to England.

He requests the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic to accept the assurances of his high consideration,

(Signed) MALMESBURY.

Lille, Saturday, 16th September, 8. P. M.

(No. 47. E.) Note from the French Plenipotentiaries to Lord Malmesbury.

The undersigned Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic, commissioned to treat of peace with England, have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Lord Malmesbury's answer to the note which they addressed to him this day.

They think it right to observe to him, that he does not appear to have seized the real meaning of their note; that it by no means contains refusal to continue the negotiations, but, on the contrary, the means for giving them activity, and for following them up with a success, no less desirable to the two nations, than it would be flattering to the ministers charged with the conduct of them.

The French Government is so far from entertaining the intentions which the note of Lord Malmesbury appears to impute to them, that the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic have received no order to quit Lille, after the departure of the Minister Plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty.

The Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic request Lord Malmesbury to accept the assurances of their high consideration.

(Signed) TREILHARD.
BONNIER.

By the Ministers Plenipotentiary, the Sec. Gen. of the Legation,
DERCHÉ.

Lille, 30 Fructidor, 5th year of the French
Republic. (Sept. 16, 1797.)

(No. 48. F.) Note from Lord Malmesbury to the French Plenipotentiaries.

The undersigned Minister Plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty has the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the note which the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic transmitted to him yesterday, through the hands of the Secretary General of the Legation. He thinks he cannot answer it better than by submitting to them in his turn the following observations.

That

That having already by his note, dated July 24, and in obedience to the express orders of his Court, given an answer to the question which is now so unexpectedly renewed, a question, that in appearance relates solely to the limits of his full powers (which are in the most ample form), but which does in fact require a declaration of the whole extent of his instructions; and not being authorized to quit the place of his destination without the express orders of the King his Master, in any case except that of the rupture of the negotiation; he could not help considering a note enjoining him, in consequence of a decree of the Executive Directory, to return to his court in the space of four-and-twenty hours, as ill calculated to accelerate the conclusion of peace: nevertheless, to answer the assurances of the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic, and to testify his desire to seize their real meaning, with respect to which he should be very sorry to deceive himself, he thinks that it would be more satisfactory to meet once more; and if the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic should be of the same opinion, Lord Malmesbury would propose that this meeting should take place at an earlier hour than usual, in order that he may have time to take such steps as the result of their conference may render necessary. He desires the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic to accept the assurances of his high consideration.

(Signed) MALMESBURY.

Lisle, Sunday, Sept. 17, 1797.

(No. 49. G.) Note from the French Plenipotentiaries to Lord Malmesbury.

The undersigned Ministers Plenipotentiaries of the French Republic, commissioned to treat of peace with England, have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the note which the Minister Plenipotentiary of His Britannic Majesty has transmitted to them this morning, referring to the notes addressed to Lord Malmesbury on the 29th and 30th Fructidor, and especially to the first of yesterday, they agree to the meeting which Lord Malmesbury appears to desire, and propose the hour of noon.

They request Lord Malmesbury to accept the assurances of their high consideration.

(Signed) TREILHARD.
BONNIER.

Lisle, 1st Complementary Day, 5th year of
the French Republic, (17 Sept. 1797).

By the Ministers Plenipotentiary,
the Sec. Gen. of the Legation.
DERCHÉ.

(No. 50.) Dispatch from Lord Grenville to Lord Malmesbury, dated
Downing-Street, Sept. 22, 1797.

MY LORD,

I have had the honour of laying before His Majesty your Lordship's dispatches, in which you have given an account of the extraordinary conduct of the new Plenipotentiaries of the French Republic, of the answers given by your Lordship to their unjustifiable demand, and of your consequent departure from Lisle.

I have the satisfaction to be able to assure your Lordship that His Majesty has been pleased to express his entire approbation of your Lordship's

H

ship's

ship's judicious and temperate conduct in the unprecedented situation in which you were placed, and of the manner in which you expressed yourself, both in your Official Notes, and in your conversations with the French Plenipotentiaries, as well as of that in which you have conducted yourself during the whole course of the negotiation, which seems too likely to be now brought to its close.

As it appears, however, that some further answer will probably be expected by the French Government to their late extraordinary demand, notwithstanding the full and conclusive reply given in your Lordship's notes, I have received the King's commands to transmit to you the inclosed draft of a note, which it is His Majesty's pleasure that your Lordship should transmit to the Plenipotentiaries at Lisle, by a messenger whom I shall direct to be in readiness for that purpose.

(Signed) GRENVILLE.

Right Honourable Lord Malmesbury.

(No. 51.) Note from Lord Malmesbury to the French Plenipotentiaries.

The undersigned Minister Plenipotentiary of His Britannic Majesty has rendered to his Court a faithful account of the circumstances that have interrupted the exercise of those important functions which His Majesty has been pleased to entrust to him. His Majesty has deigned to honour with his entire approbation the answers which the undersigned has already made to the extraordinary and unexpected demands which the new Plenipotentiaries of the French Republic addressed to him immediately upon their arrival at Lisle.

But in order to leave no doubt respecting the nature and object of this demand, the undersigned has been expressly ordered to declare, in the name of his Court:

I. That the full powers with which His Majesty had thought proper to furnish him for negotiating and concluding a Treaty of Peace, are conceived and expressed in the most ample form, authorizing the undersigned fully, and without reserve, to sign any treaty which he might agree with the French Plenipotentiaries, whatever its nature or conditions might be; conforming himself in all cases to the instructions which he might receive from his Court.

II. That these full powers have been received and recognized as sufficient, as well by the Plenipotentiaries with whom he has hitherto treated, as by the Directory themselves, and that there is consequently no room for any new discussion upon a subject which has already been closed by common agreement, and which moreover is not liable to any doubt or difficulty whatever; every thing which has been done hitherto upon this subject, being entirely conformable to customs long established and recognized by all the nations of Europe.

III. That the demand of the Directory therefore, in reality, refers not to the full powers of the undersigned, but to the extent of his instructions, of which the Directory could not, under any circumstances, require any communication, further than as the undersigned himself might judge such a communication conducive to the success of the negotiation; and that very far from being in a situation to be called upon for any new explanations whatever, the undersigned had every reason to expect, from the repeated communications which had been made to him by the French Plenipotentiaries, that he should immediately receive a Counter Projet, of a nature to facilitate the further progress of the negotiation which had been suspended for more than two months.

IV. That

IV. That the Court of London had good reason to be still more astonished at the substance of the new demand made to the undersigned; a demand relating to preliminary conditions which had already been rejected at the very commencement of the negotiation, and from which the French Plenipotentiaries had in effect departed, by a formal notification of the measures which the Directory were in consequence taking for the purpose of coming to some arrangement with their allies.

V. That it is therefore only by consenting to treat upon the basis of the project, detailed with so much openness, which was presented by the undersigned a few days after his arrival at Lille, or by returning a contre projet of a conciliatory nature, agreeable to the assurances which he received so long ago, that it appears possible to continue the negotiation, which the Plenipotentiaries have so strongly assured him that the Directory did not wish to break off, notwithstanding the measures lately adopted with respect to him: A measure which the undersigned forbears to characterize, but which could not fail to produce in this country the impression of a disposition by no means pacific on the part of the Directory.

The undersigned is directed to add, that His Majesty would see with real regret the certainty of the existence of such a disposition, so little compatible with the ardent desire with which he is animated to restore peace to the two nations; but that if, without having himself contributed to it on his part, he should again find himself under the necessity of continuing the war, he will conduct himself upon every occasion agreeably to the same principles, doing every thing which can depend upon him for the re-establishment of peace, but persisting to defend, with an unshaken firmness, the dignity of his crown, and the interests of his people.

The Minister Plenipotentiary of His Britannic Majesty requests the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic to accept the assurance of his high consideration.

(Signed)

MALMESBURY.

London, the 22d of September 1797.

(No. 52.) Note from the French Plenipotentiaries to Lord Malmesbury.

The Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic, commissioned to treat of peace with England, has received the note, dated from London, which has been brought to them by an extraordinary messenger, from Lord Malmesbury. They have the honour to answer to him, that their note of the 29th Fructidor, to which they refer, offered the double assurance of the settled intention of the French Government to continue the negotiations for peace, and of its constant determination not to agree to any other conditions than such as are compatible with the dignity of the French Republic.

A peace, of which the basis should be contrary to the laws, or to the engagements taken with its allies, would never satisfy the hopes of the nation. It is a point from which the Executive Directory has never departed, and upon which its sentiments have never varied.

Lord Malmesbury having formally declared in his notes of the 15th and 24th of July, and in the last instance in that of the 17th September, that he had not the powers necessary for restoring the Dutch and Spanish possessions, occupied by the troops of His Britannic Majesty, the Executive Directory has given a new proof of its openness, and of its de-

fire to accelerate the conclusion of peace, in requiring Lord Malmesbury to return to his court, for the purpose of obtaining the authority, without which, he cannot conclude : a measure rendered necessary by the declaration of the Minister Plenipotentiary of His Britannic Majesty, and upon which it is impossible to give a wrong impression to any thinking and impartial mind.

The Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic request Lord Malmesbury to accept the assurances of their high consideration.

(Signed)

TREILHARD.
BONNIER.

Lille, 4th Vendemiaire, 5th year of the
Republic, (Sept. 25, 1797.)

DERCHÉ.

(No. 53.) Note from the French Plenipotentiaries to Lord Malmesbury.

The Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic, charged to treat for peace with England, have the honour to inform Lord Malmesbury, that having sent a copy of his last note to their Government, the Executive Directory has directed them to declare in its name : That it has never ceased to wish for peace ; That it gave an unequivocal proof of the sentiment which animates it, when it ordered the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the Republic to require a categorical explanation as to the powers given by the English Government to its Minister Plenipotentiary : That this demand had, and could have, no other object but to bring the negotiation to a speedy and successful issue.

That the order given to the Plenipotentiaries of the Republic to remain at Lille after the departure of Lord Malmesbury, is another proof that the Directory had desired and foreseen his return with powers that should not be illusory, and the limitation of which should no longer be a pretext for delaying the conclusion of peace :

That such are still the hopes and intentions of the Executive Directory, which enjoins the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the Republic not to quit Lille till the continued absence of the Negotiator should no longer leave any doubt of the intention of his Britannic Majesty to break off all negotiation.

That consequently the 25th Vendemiaire (16th of October old style) is the period fixed for the recall of the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic, supposing that, at that time, the Minister Plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty shall not have arrived at Lille.

The Executive Directory will feel the greatest regret that a reconciliation, already twice attempted, should not be perfected ; but its conscience, and the whole of Europe, will bear it testimony, that it is the English Government alone that will have inflicted the scourge of war upon the two nations.

The Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic entreat the Minister Plenipotentiary of His Britannic Majesty to accept the assurances of their high consideration.

(Signed)

TREILHARD.
BONNIER.

Lille, 10th Vendemiaire, 6th year of the French
Republic, (October 1, 1797.

The Sec. of Legation,

DERCHÉ.

(No.

(No. 54.) Note from Lord Malmesbury to the French Plenipotentiaries.

The undersigned having laid before the King's Ministry the note of the Plenipotentiaries of the French Republic, is directed to observe to them.

That it is only in consequence of the formal and positive injunction of the Directory that he quitted Lille; that his powers were neither illusory nor limited; and that nothing was omitted on his part to accelerate the negotiation, which has been only retarded by the delays of the Directory, and which at this moment is only suspended by its act.

With regard to the renewal of the conferences, the undersigned can only refer to his last note, where he has explained with frankness and precision, the only means which remain for continuing the negotiation; observing, at the same time, that the King could no longer treat in an enemy's country, without being certain that the customs established amongst all civilized nations, with regard to public Ministers, and especially to those charged to negotiate for the re-establishment of peace, would be respected for the future in the person of His Plenipotentiary.

The Minister Plenipotentiary of His Britannic Majesty requests the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the French Republic to accept the assurance of his high consideration.

(Signed) MALMESBURY.

London, 5th October, 1797.

HIS MAJESTY'S SPEECH

On opening the present Session of Parliament:

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

It is matter of great concern to me, that the earnest endeavours which I have continued to employ, since I last met you in Parliament, to restore to my subjects the blessings of peace, on secure and honourable terms, have unhappily been rendered ineffectual.

The Declaration which I have caused to be published, and the other papers which I have directed to be laid before you, will, I am confident, abundantly prove to you, and to the world, that every step has been taken on my part, which could tend to accelerate the conclusion of peace; and that the long delay and final rupture of the negotiation are solely to be ascribed to the evasive conduct, the unwarrantable pretensions, and the inordinate ambition of those with whom we have to contend, and, above all, to their inveterate animosity against these kingdoms.

I have

I have the fullest reliance, under the blessings of Providence, on the vigour and wisdom of your counsels, and on the zeal, magnanimity, and courage, of a great and free people, sensible that they are contending for their dearest interests, and determined to shew themselves worthy of the blessings which they are struggling to preserve.

Compelled as we are, by the most evident necessity, to persevere in the defence of all that is dear to us, till a more just and pacifick spirit shall prevail on the part of the enemy, we have the satisfaction of knowing that we possess means and resources proportioned to the objects which are at stake.

During the period of hostilities, and under the unavoidable pressure of accumulated burdens, our revenue has continued highly productive, our national industry has been extended, and our commerce has surpassed its former limits.

The public spirit of my people has been eminently displayed; my troops, of every description, have acquired fresh claims to the esteem and admiration of their country; and the repeated successes of my navy over all our different enemies, have been recently crowned by the signal and decisive victory with which Providence has rewarded the exertions of my fleet under the command of Admiral Lord Duncan.

No event could be attended with more important and beneficial consequences, or form a more brilliant addition to the numerous and heroic exploits which, in the course of the present war, have raised to a pitch hitherto unequalled the naval glory of the country.

GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

I have directed the estimates for the ensuing year to be laid before you. The state of the war, joined to the happy consequences of our recent success, will, I trust, admit of some diminution of expence, consistently with the vigorous efforts which our situation indispensably requires. In considering what may be the best mode of defraying the heavy expence which will still be unavoidable, you will, I am persuaded, bear in mind that the present crisis presents every motive to animate you to the most effectual and spirited exertions; the true value of any temporary sacrifices, which you may find necessary for this purpose, can only be estimated by comparing them with the importance of supporting effectually our public credit, and convincing the enemy that, while we retain an ardent desire for the conclusion of peace on safe and honourable terms, we possess the means, as well as the determination, to support with vigour this arduous contest, as long as it may be necessary for maintaining the safety, honour, and independence of these kingdoms.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

After the experience I have had of your loyalty and attachment to me, and of your anxious regard for the interests of my subjects, I have only to recommend to you a perseverance in the same principles and conduct.

The events of every day must more and more impress you with a just sense of the blessings which we derive from our civil and religious establishments, and which have so long distinguished us among all the nations of Europe. These blessings can only be preserved by inculcating

ting and enforcing a due reverence and obedience to the laws, by repressing with promptitude every attempt to disturb our internal tranquillity, and by maintaining inviolate that happy Constitution which we inherit from our ancestors, on which the security and happiness of every class of my subjects essentially depend.

ADDRESS OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to return your Majesty our humble thanks for your Majesty's most gracious Speech from the Throne; and to express to your Majesty the just sense which we entertain of your Majesty's paternal anxiety for the welfare of your subjects, manifested in the earnest desire expressed by your Majesty for the restoration of peace on secure and honourable terms.

We return your Majesty our humble thanks for the communications which you have directed to be laid before us; and we assure your Majesty, that we shall proceed, without delay, to the consideration of those measures, which the circumstances of the present crisis require; and that, while we participate with your Majesty in the concern which your Majesty feels at the failure of your earnest endeavours to procure for your people the blessings of peace, we are fully confident, from the uniform tenour of your Majesty's conduct, that every step has been taken by your Majesty which could tend to accelerate that object; and that it is to the unwarrantable pretensions and inordinate ambition of the enemy, and, above all, to their inveterate animosity against these kingdoms, that the long delay and final rupture of the negotiation are to be ascribed.

We intreat your Majesty to believe that, impressed as we are with the necessity and the magnitude of the contest in which we are engaged, as well as of the value of the interests which we have at stake, no exertions will be wanting on our part to enable your Majesty to prosecute the war with vigour, until a more just and pacific spirit shall prevail on the part of the enemy; and to employ, in the defence of every thing that is dearest to us, those means and resources which the present situation of our country holds out.

We assure your Majesty that we reflect with peculiar satisfaction on the public spirit which has been displayed by your Majesty's subjects, and on the conduct by which your Majesty's troops, of every description, have acquired fresh claims to our esteem and admiration.

We are particularly desirous of embracing the earliest opportunity to offer to your Majesty our warm and heartfelt congratulations on that signal and decisive victory which has crowned the series of splendid successes obtained by your Majesty's fleets over all our different enemies in the course of the present war; a victory no less important in its
con-

consequences, than glorious in its circumstances by which it is distinguished.

We are deeply sensible of the manner in which your Majesty is pleased to express your gracious acceptance of our best endeavours to testify by our conduct our anxious regard for the interests of our country, and our invariable attachment to your Majesty's person and government.

Sensible of the blessings which, under your Majesty's paternal care, are derived to us from our civil and religious establishments, and which distinguish us from among all the nations of Europe; and persuaded that these blessings can only be preserved by inculcating and enforcing a due reverence and obedience to the laws, and by repressing with promptitude every attempt to disturb our internal tranquillity,—it shall be the first object of our attention to contribute, by every means in our power, to the maintenance of that happy Constitution which we inherit from our ancestors, and on which the security and happiness of every class of your Majesty's subjects essentially depend.

HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS ANSWER.

MY LORDS,

I thank you for this loyal, dutiful, and affectionate address.

In a crisis of so much importance to the security and happiness of every class of My subjects, it is a great satisfaction to Me to know that you entertain a just sense of the nature, magnitude, and necessity of the contest in which we are engaged; and that I may rely with confidence on your support in My fixed and unalterable determination to maintain to the utmost the laws, liberties, and religion of My people, and the dignity, honour, and independence of My kingdoms.

THE HUMBLE ADDRESS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS TO THE KING.

MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of Great Britain, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to return your Majesty our humble thanks for your most gracious speech from the Throne, and for the communication of the declaration, and the other papers respecting the Negotiation with France, which your Majesty has been graciously pleased to direct to be laid before us.

Permit us to assure your Majesty, that we shall not fail to apply ourselves, with the utmost diligence and attention, to the consideration
of

of the measures which the present crisis requires ; but we cannot refrain from expressing, at the earliest moment, our firm determination to afford your Majesty the most effectual support in resisting every unwarrantable pretension, and checking every attempt dictated by inordinate ambition on the part of those with whom we have to contend.

We entertain a firm persuasion, that all your Majesty's faithful subjects feel as they ought the value of the blessings which they are struggling to preserve, and will not fail, in every situation, to support your Majesty, in defence of their essential interests, with zeal, magnanimity, and courage, worthy of a great and free people : and we must, at the present moment, observe, with peculiar satisfaction, the proofs afforded of our means and internal resources in the flourishing state of the revenue, industry, and commerce, of the country.

With the utmost gratitude we acknowledge the sense which your Majesty expresses of the public spirit which has been so eminently displayed by your people, and of the conduct of your Majesty's troops of every description, which has justly entitled them to the additional esteem and admiration of their country.

And we most heartily congratulate your Majesty on the signal and decisive victory with which Providence has rewarded the exertions of your fleet under the command of Admiral Lord Duncan ; an event which has crowned the repeated maritime successes obtained over all our enemies, and has, indeed, afforded a brilliant addition to the numerous and heroic exploits which, in the course of the present war, have raised to the highest pitch the naval glory of the country.

It will afford us great satisfaction to find that any branches of our expence will admit of reduction, consistently with the continuance of those vigorous efforts which must be necessary for our safety, and which, at all events, cannot fail to be attended with heavy expence. In considering what may be the best mode of defraying it, we shall, undoubtedly, bear in mind the nature of the present crisis ; and, in estimating the value of any temporary sacrifices, we shall not lose sight of the infinite importance of supporting effectually our public credit, and of convincing the enemy that, while we join in your Majesty's anxious desire for the conclusion of peace, on safe and honourable terms, we possess the means, as well as the determination, to support with vigour this arduous contest, as long as it may be rendered necessary, for maintaining the safety, honour, and independence, of these kingdoms.

We beseech your Majesty to believe, that our loyalty and attachment to your Majesty, and the anxious regard for the interests of your subjects, will ensure our perseverance in that line of conduct which may best preserve the advantages resulting to your people from your Majesty's auspicious Government.

The blessings which we derive from our civil and religious establishments have long been deeply imprinted on our minds ; and we cannot but feel more and more, from the events of every day, how much they distinguish us among all the nations of Europe ; we shall never be unmindful that they can only be preserved by inculcating and enforcing a due reverence and obedience to the laws, by repressing with promptitude every attempt to disturb our internal tranquillity, and by maintaining inviolate that happy Constitution which we inherit from our ancestors, on which the security and happiness of every class of your Majesty's subjects essentially depend.

HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS ANSWER.

GENTLEMEN,

I return you my warmest thanks for this loyal and dutiful address, and for the expressions of your affectionate attachment to my person and government. The assurances of your firm determination to resist, to the utmost, the unwarrantable pretensions and inordinate ambition of the enemy, afford me the highest satisfaction at this important conjuncture. They justify the reliance which I have uniformly placed on the vigour and wisdom of your councils, and leave me no room to doubt that the strength and resources of these kingdoms will be effectually employed in supporting our dearest interests, maintaining our happy constitution, and vindicating the honour and independence of the country.

The HUMBLE ADDRESS of the Right Honourable the LORDS SPIRITUAL and TEMPORAL, and COMMONS, in Parliament assembled, presented to HIS MAJESTY, on Wednesday, November 15, 1797.

We, your MAJESTY'S most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in Parliament assembled, have taken into our most serious consideration the Papers which your MAJESTY has been pleased to direct to be laid before us, on the subject of the Negotiation into which your Majesty had entered, with a view of restoring to your People a secure and honourable Peace. In every stage of that transaction, we have recognized your Majesty's invariable and unremitted solicitude for our prosperity and welfare; while we have seen on the other hand the most abundant proofs of the continuance of that spirit of inveterate animosity and desperate ambition on the part of our enemies, in which the present contest first originated. Your MAJESTY'S conduct, characterized by an unexampled moderation, openness and consistency, has left the enemy no means of evasion, no subterfuge of disguise or artifice. It can no longer be denied, that their conduct is actuated by a fixed determination of excluding all means of Peace, and of pursuing, at all hazards, their hostile designs against the happiness and safety of these kingdoms. Even the vain pretence of pacific dispositions is now abandoned, and the real purpose of all their Councils, and all their measures, is at length openly and publicly avowed. It is to our Laws and Government that they have declared their irreconcilable hatred. No sacrifice will content them, but that of our Liberty; no concession, but that of our envied and happy Constitution.

Under such circumstances, we feel the duty we owe, in this great crisis, to God and our Country. Animated by the same sentiments which your MAJESTY has been pleased to declare to your people and to the world; attached to your MAJESTY by principle, duty and gratitude, and sensible that it is only from courage and firmness that we can look, either for present safety or permanent peace; we are determined to defend, with unshaken resolution, your MAJESTY'S Throne, the

the lives and properties of our fellow-subjects, the Government and Constitution of our Country, and the honour and independence of the British Empire. We know that great exertions are necessary; we are prepared to make them: and, placing our firm reliance on that Divine Providence which has always hitherto been extended to us, we will support your MAJESTY to the utmost, and stand or fall with our Religion, Laws and Liberty.

HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS ANSWER.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

NOTHING COULD BE MORE SATISFACTORY TO ME THAN THIS UNANIMOUS DECLARATION OF THE SENTIMENTS OF MY TWO HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT. THEY ARE SUCH AS THE CONDUCT AND DECLARED INTENTION OF THE ENEMY COULD NOT FAIL TO PRODUCE. WE ARE ENGAGED IN A CAUSE WHICH IS COMMON TO US ALL; AND CONTENDING FOR EVERY INTEREST WHICH A FREE AND INDEPENDENT NATION CAN HAVE TO MAINTAIN. UNDER THE BLESSING OF PROVIDENCE, I LOOK WITH CONFIDENCE TO THE ISSUE OF THIS GREAT CONTEST, BUT IN EVERY EVENT MY RESOLUTION IS TAKEN. IT IS SUCH AS I OWE TO GOD, TO MY COUNTRY, AND TO MYSELF; AND IT IS CONFIRMED BY THE SENTIMENTS WHICH YOU HAVE THIS DAY DECLARED TO ME. I WILL NOT BE WANTING TO MY PEOPLE, BUT WILL STAND OR FALL WITH THEM, IN THE DEFENCE OF OUR RELIGION, AND IN THE MAINTENANCE OF THE INDEPENDENCE, LAWS AND LIBERTIES OF THESE KINGDOMS.

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